

THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

NOVEMBER 1907.

THE BROKEN ROAD.¹

BY A. E. W. MASON.

CHAPTER XXXI.

AN OLD TOMB AND A NEW SHRINE.

THE messenger whom Ralston sent with a sealed letter to the Resident at Kohara left Peshawur in the afternoon and travelled up the road by way of Dir and the Lowari Pass. He travelled quickly, spending little of his time at the rest-houses on the way, and yet arrived no sooner on that account. It was not he at all who brought his news to Kohara. Neither letter nor messenger, indeed, ever reached the Resident's door, although Captain Phillips learned something of the letter's contents a day before the messenger was due. A queer and, to use his own epithet, a dramatic stroke of fortune aided him at a very critical moment.

It happened in this way. While Captain Phillips was smoking a cheroot as he sat over his correspondence in the morning, a servant from the great Palace on the hill brought to him a letter in the Khan's own handwriting. It was a flowery letter and invoked many blessings upon the Khan's faithful friend and brother, and wound up with a single sentence, like a lady's postscript, in which the whole object of the letter was contained. Would his Excellency the Captain, in spite of his overwhelming duties, of which the Khan was well aware, since they all tended to the great benefit and prosperity of his State, be kind enough to pay a visit to the Khan that day?

¹ Copyright, 1907, by A. E. W. Mason, in the United States of America.
VOL. XXIII.—NO. 137, N.S.

'What's the old rascal up to now?' thought Captain Phillips. He replied, with less ornament and fewer flourishes, that he would come after breakfast; and mounting his horse at the appointed time he rode down through the wide street of Kohara and up the hill at the end, on the terraced slopes of which climbed the gardens and mud walls of the Palace. He was led at once into the big reception-room with the painted walls and the silver-gilt chairs, where the Khan had once received his son with a loaded rifle across his knees. The Khan was now seated with his courtiers about him, and was carving the rind of a pomegranate into patterns, like a man with his thoughts far away. But he welcomed Captain Phillips with alacrity and at once dismissed his Court.

Captain Phillips settled down patiently in his chair. He was well aware of the course the interview would take. The Khan would talk away without any apparent aim for an hour or two hours, passing carelessly from subject to subject, and then suddenly the important question would be asked, the important subject mooted. On this occasion, however, the Khan came with unusual rapidity to his point. A few inquiries as to the Colonel's health, a short oration on the backwardness of the crops, a lengthier one upon his fidelity to and friendship for the British Government and the miserable return ever made to him for it, and then came a question ludicrously inapposite and put with the solemn *naïveté* of a child.

'I suppose you know,' said the Khan, tugging at his great grey beard, 'that my grandfather married a fairy for one of his wives?'

It was on the strength of such abrupt questions that strangers were apt to think that the Khan had fallen into his second childhood before his time. But the Resident knew his man. He was aware that the Khan was watching for his answer. He sat up in his chair and answered politely:

'So, your Highness, I have heard.'

'Yes, it is true,' continued the Khan. 'Moreover, the fairy bore him a daughter who is still alive, though very old.'

'So there is still a fairy in the family,' replied Captain Phillips pleasantly, while he wondered what in the world the Khan was driving at. 'Yes, indeed, I know that. For only a week ago I was asked by a poor man up the valley to secure your Highness' intercession. It seems that he is much plagued by a fairy who has taken possession of his house, and since your Highness is related to the fairies he would be very grateful if you would persuade the fairy to go away.'

'I know,' said the Khan gravely. 'The case has already been brought to me. The fellow *will* open closed boxes in his house, and the fairy resents it.'

'Then your Highness has exorcised the fairy?'

'No; I have forbidden him to open boxes in his house,' said the Khan; and then, with a smile, 'But it was not of him we were speaking, but of the fairy in my family.'

He leaned forward and his voice shook.

'She sends me warnings, Captain Sahib. Two nights ago, by the flat stone where the fairies dance, she heard them—the voices of an innumerable multitude in the air talking the Chilti tongue—talking of trouble to come in the near days.'

He spoke with burning eyes fixed upon the Resident and with his fingers playing nervously in and out among the hairs of his beard. Whether the Khan really believed the story of the fairies—there is nothing more usual than a belief in fairies in the countries bordered by the snow-peaks of the Hindu Kush—or whether he used the story as a blind to conceal the real source of his fear, the Resident could not decide. But what he did know was this: The Khan of Chiltistan was desperately afraid. A whole programme of reform was sketched out for the Captain's hearing.

'I have been a good friend to the English, Captain Sahib. I have kept my mullahs and my people quiet all these years. There are things which might be better, as your Excellency has courteously pointed out to me, and the words have never been forgotten. The taxes no doubt are very burdensome, and it may be the caravans from Bokhara and Central Asia should pay less to the treasury as they pass through Chiltistan, and perhaps I do unjustly in buying what I want from them at my own price.' Thus he delicately described the system of barefaced robbery which he practised on the traders who passed southwards to India through Chiltistan. 'But these things can be altered. Moreover,' and here he spoke with an air of distinguished virtue, 'I propose to sell no more of my people into slavery—No, and to give none of them, not even the youngest, as presents to my friends. It is quite true of course that the wood which I sell to the merchants of Peshawur is cut and brought down by forced labour, but next year I am thinking of paying. I have been a good friend to the English all my life, Colonel Sahib.'

Captain Phillips had heard promises of the kind before and accounted them at their true value. But he had never heard

them delivered with so earnest a protestation. And he rode away from the Palace with the disturbing conviction that there was something new in the wind of which he did not know.

He rode up the valley, pondering what that something new might be. Hillside and plain were ablaze with autumn colours. The fruit in the orchards—peaches, apples, and grapes—was ripe, and on the river bank the gold of the willows glowed among thickets of red rose. High up on the hills, field rose above field, supported by stone walls. In the bosom of the valley groups of great walnut-trees marked where the villages stood.

Captain Phillips rode through the villages. Everywhere he was met with smiling faces and courteous salutes; but he drew no comfort from them. The Chilti would smile pleasantly while he was fitting his knife in under your fifth rib. Only once did Phillips receive a hint that something was amiss, but the hint was so elusive that it did no more than quicken his uneasiness.

He was riding over grass, and came silently upon a man whose back was turned to him.

'So, Dadu,' he said quietly, 'you must not open closed boxes any more in your house.'

The man jumped round. He was not merely surprised, he was startled.

'Your Excellency rides up the valley?' he cried, and almost he barred the way.

'Why not, Dadu?'

Dadu's face became impassive.

'It is as your Excellency wills. It is a good day for a ride,' said Dadu; and Captain Phillips rode on.

It might of course have been that the man had been startled merely by the unexpected voice behind him; and the question which had leaped from his mouth might have meant nothing at all. Captain Phillips turned round in his saddle. Dadu was still standing where he had left him, and was following the rider with his eyes.

'I wonder if there is anything up the valley which I ought to know about?' Captain Phillips said to himself, and he rode forward now with a watchful eye. The hills began to close in; the bosom of the valley to narrow. Nine miles from Kohara it became a defile through which the river roared between low precipitous cliffs. Above the cliffs on each side a level of stony ground, which here and there had been cleared and cultivated, stretched to the mountain walls. At one point a great fan of debris spread out

from a side valley. Across this fan the track mounted, and then once more the valley widened out. On the river's edge a roofless ruin of a building, with a garden run wild at one end of it, stood apart. A few hundred yards beyond there was a village buried among bushes, and then a deep nullah cut clean across the valley. It was a lonely and a desolate spot. Yet Captain Phillips never rode across the fan of shale and came within sight of it but his imagination began to people it with living figures and a surge of wild events. He reined in his horse as he came to the brow of the hill, and sat for a moment looking downwards. Then he rode very quickly a few yards down the hill. Before, he and his horse had been standing out clear against the sky. Now, against the background of grey and brown he would be an unnoticeable figure.

He halted again, but this time his eyes, instead of roving over the valley, were fixed intently upon one particular spot. Under the wall of the great ruined building he had seen something move. He made sure now of what the something was. There were half a dozen horses—no, seven—seven horses tethered apart from each other, and not a syce for any one of them. Captain Phillips felt his blood quicken. The Khan's protestations and Dadu's startled question had primed him to expectation. Cautiously he rode down into the valley, and suspense grew upon him as he rode. It was a still, windless day, and noise carried far. The only sound he heard was the sound of the stones rattling under the hoofs of his horse. But in a little while he reached turf and level ground and so rode forward in silence. When he was within a couple of hundred yards of the ruin he halted and tied up his horse in a grove of trees. Thence he walked across an open space, passed beneath the remnant of a gateway into a court and, crossing the court, threaded his way through a network of narrow alleys between crumbling mud walls. As he advanced the sound of a voice reached his ears—a deep monotonous voice, which spoke with a kind of rhythm. The words Phillips could not distinguish, but there was no need that he should. The intonation, the flow of the sentences, told him clearly enough that somewhere beyond was a man praying. And then he stopped, for other voices broke suddenly in with loud and, as it seemed to Phillips, with fierce appeals. But the appeals died away, the one voice again took up the prayer, and again Phillips stepped forward.

At the end of the alley he came to a doorway in a high wall. There was no door. He stood on the threshold of the doorway and looked in. He looked into a court open to the sky,

and the seven horses and the monotonous voice were explained to him. There were seven young men—nobles of Chiltistan, as Phillips knew from their *chogas* of velvet and Chinese silk—gathered in the court. They were kneeling with their backs towards him and the doorway, so that not one of them had noticed his approach. They were facing a small rough-hewn obelisk of stone which stood at the head of a low mound of earth at the far end of the court. Six of them were grouped in a sort of semicircle, and the seventh, a man clad from head to foot in green robes, knelt a little in advance and alone. But from none of the seven nobles did the voice proceed. In front of them all knelt an old man in the brown homespun of the people. Phillips, from the doorway, could see his great beard wagging as he prayed, and knew him for one of the incendiary priests of Chiltistan.

The prayer was one with which Phillips was familiar: The Day was at hand; the infidels would be scattered as chaff; the God of Mahommed was besought to send the innumerable company of his angels and to make his faithful people invulnerable to wounds. Phillips could have gone on with the prayer himself, had the mullah failed. But it was not the prayer which held him rooted to the spot, but the setting of the prayer.

The scene was in itself strange and significant enough. These seven gaily robed youths assembled secretly in a lonely and desolate ruin nine miles from Kohara had come thither not merely for prayer. The prayer would but be the seal upon a compact, the blessing upon an undertaking where life and death were the issues. But there was something more; and that something more gave to the scene in Phillips' eyes a very startling irony. He knew well how quickly in these countries the actual record of events is confused, and how quickly any tomb or any monument becomes a shrine before which 'the faithful' will bow and make their prayer. But that here of all places, and before this tomb of all tombs, the God of the Mahommedans should be invoked—this was life turning playwright with a vengeance. It needed just one more detail to complete the picture and the next moment that detail was provided. For Phillips moved.

His boot rattled upon a loose stone. The prayer ceased, the worshippers rose abruptly to their feet and turned as one man towards the doorway. Phillips saw, face to face, the youth robed in green who had knelt at the head of his companions. It was Shere Ali, the Prince of Chiltistan.

Phillips advanced at once into the centre of the group. He was wise enough not to hold out his hand lest it should be refused. But he spoke as though he had taken leave of Shere Ali only yesterday.

‘So your Highness has returned?’

‘Yes,’ replied Shere Ali, and he spoke in the same indifferent tone.

But both men knew, however unconcernedly they spoke, that Shere Ali’s return was to be momentous in the history of Chiltistan. Shere Ali’s father knew it too, that troubled man in the Palace above Kohara.

‘When did you reach Kohara?’ Phillips asked.

‘I have not yet been to Kohara. I ride down from here this afternoon.’

Shere Ali smiled as he spoke, and the smile said more than the words. There was a challenge, a defiance in it, which were unmistakable. But Phillips chose to interpret the words quite simply.

‘Shall we go together?’ he said, and then he looked towards the doorway. The others had gathered there, the six young men and the priest. They were armed, and more than one had his hand ready upon his sword-hilt. ‘But you have friends, I see,’ he added grimly. He began to wonder whether he would himself ride back to Kohara that afternoon.

‘Yes,’ replied Shere Ali quietly, ‘I have friends in Chiltistan,’ and he laid a stress upon the name of his country, as though he wished to show to Captain Phillips that he recognised no friends outside its borders.

Again Phillips’s thoughts were swept to the irony, the tragic irony, of the scene in which he now was called to play a part.

‘Does your Highness know this spot?’ he asked, suddenly. Then he pointed to the tomb and the rude obelisk. ‘Does your Highness know whose bones are laid at the foot of that monument?’

Shere Ali shrugged his shoulders.

‘Within these walls, in one of these roofless rooms, you were born,’ said Phillips, ‘and that grave before which you prayed is the grave of a man named Luffe, who defended this fort in those days.’

‘It is not,’ replied Shere Ali. ‘It is the tomb of a saint,’ and he called to the mullah for corroboration of his words.

‘It is the tomb of Luffe. He fell in this courtyard, struck

down not by a bullet, but by overwork and the strain of the siege. I know. I have the story from an old soldier whom I met in Cashmere this summer and who served here under Luffe. Luffe fell in this court, and when he died was buried here.'

Shere Ali in spite of himself was beginning to listen to Captain Phillips's words.

'Who was the soldier?' he asked.

'Colonel Dewes.'

Shere Ali nodded his head as though he had expected the name. Then he said as he turned away:

'What is Luffe to me? What should I know of Luffe?'

'This,' said Phillips, and he spoke in so arresting a voice that Shere Ali turned again to listen to him. 'When Luffe was dying, he uttered an appeal—he bequeathed it to India, as his last service; and the appeal was that you should not be sent to England, that neither Eton nor Oxford should know you, that you should remain in your own country.'

The Resident had Shere Ali's attention now.

'He said that?' cried the Prince in a startled voice. Then he pointed his finger to the grave. 'The man lying there said that?'

'Yes.'

'And no one listened, I suppose?' said Shere Ali bitterly.

'Or listened too late,' said Phillips. 'Like Dewes, who only since he met you in Calcutta, one day upon the racecourse, seems dimly to have understood the words the dead man spoke.'

Shere Ali was silent. He stood looking at the grave and the obelisk with a gentler face than he had shown before.

'Why did he not wish it?' he asked at length.

'He said that it would mean unhappiness for you; that it might mean ruin for Chiltistan.'

'Did he say that?' said Shere Ali slowly, and there was something of awe in his voice. Then he recovered himself and cried defiantly, 'Yet in one point he was wrong. It will not mean ruin for Chiltistan.'

So far he had spoken in English. Now he turned quickly towards his friends and spoke in his own tongue.

'It is time. We will go,' and to Captain Phillips he said, 'You shall ride back with me to Kohara. I will leave you at the doorway of the Residency.' And these words, too, he spoke in his own tongue.

There rose a clamour among the seven who waited in the door-

way, and loudest of all rose the voice of the mullah, protesting against Shere Ali's promise.

'My word is given,' said the Prince, and he turned with a smile to Captain Phillips. 'In memory of my friend'—he pointed to the grave—'for it seems I had a friend once among the white people—in memory of my friend, I give you your life.'

CHAPTER XXXII.

SURPRISES FOR CAPTAIN PHILLIPS.

THE young nobles ceased from their outcry. They went sullenly out and mounted their horses under the ruined wall of the old fort. But as they mounted they whispered together with quick glances towards Captain Phillips. The Resident intercepted the glance and had little doubt as to the subject of the whispering.

'I am in the deuce of a tight place,' he reflected; 'it's seven to one against my ever reaching Kohara, and the one's a doubtful quantity.'

He looked at Shere Ali, who seemed quite undisturbed by the prospect of mutiny amongst his followers. His face had hardened a little. That was all.

'And your horse?' Shere Ali asked.

Captain Phillips pointed towards the clump of trees where he had tied it up.

'Will you fetch it?' said Shere Ali, and as Phillips walked off, he turned towards the nobles and the old mullah who stood amongst them. Phillips heard his voice, as he began to speak, and was surprised by a masterful quiet ring in it. 'The doubtful quantity seems to have grown into a man,' he thought, and the thought gained strength when he rode his horse back from the clump of trees towards the group. Shere Ali met him gravely.

'You will ride on my right hand,' he said. 'You need have no fear.'

The seven nobles clustered behind, and the party rode at a walk over the fan of shale and through the defile into the broad valley of Kohara. Shere Ali did not speak. He rode on with a set and brooding face, and the Resident fell once more to pondering the queer scene of which he had been the witness. Even at that moment when his life was in the balance his thoughts would play with it. So complete a piece of artistry it seemed. There was the

tomb itself—an earth grave and a rough obelisk without so much as a name or a date upon it set up at its head by some past Resident at Kohara. It was appropriate and seemly to the man without friends, or family, or wife, but to whom the Frontier had been all these. He would have wished for no more himself, since vanity had played so small a part in his career. He had been the great Force upon the Frontier, keeping the Queen's peace by the strength of his character and the sagacity of his mind. Yet before his grave, invoking him as an unknown saint, the nobles of Chiltistan had knelt to pray for the destruction of such as he and the overthrow of the power which he had lived to represent. And all because his advice had been neglected.

Captain Phillips was roused out of his reflections as the cavalcade approached a village. For out of that village and from the fields about it, the men, armed for the most part with good rifles, poured towards them with cries of homage. They joined the cavalcade, marched with it past their homes, and did not turn back. Only the women and the children were left behind. And at the next village and at the next the same thing happened. The cavalcade began to swell into a small army, an army of men well equipped for war; and at the head of the gathering force Shere Ali rode with an impassive face, never speaking but to check a man from time to time who brandished a weapon at the Resident.

'Your Highness has counted the cost?' Captain Phillips asked. 'There will be but the one end to it.'

Shere Ali turned to the Resident, and though his face did not change from its brooding calm, a fire burned darkly in his eyes.

'From Afghanistan to Thibet the frontier will rise,' he said proudly.

Captain Phillips shook his head.

'From Afghanistan to Thibet the Frontier will wait, as it always waits. It will wait to see what happens in Chiltistan.'

But though he spoke boldly, he had little comfort from his thoughts. The rising had been well concerted. Those who flocked to Shere Ali were not only the villagers of the Kohara valley. There were shepherds from the hills, wild men from the far corners of Chiltistan. Already the small army could be counted with the hundred for its unit. To-morrow the hundred would be a thousand. Moreover, for once in a way there was no divided counsel. Jealousy and intrigue were not, it seemed, to do their usual work in Chiltistan. There was only one master, and he of unquestioned authority.

Else how came it that Captain Phillips rode amidst that great and frenzied throng, unhurt and almost unthreatened ?

Down the valley the roof-tops of Kohara began to show amongst the trees. The high palace on the hill with its latticed windows bulked against the evening sky. The sound of many drums was borne to the Resident's ears. The Residency stood a mile and a half from the town, in a great garden. A high wall enclosed it, but it was a house, not a fortress ; and Phillips had at his command but a few levies to defend it. One of them stood by the gate. He kept his ground as Shere Ali and his force approached. The only movement which he made was to stand at attention, and as Shere Ali halted at the entrance, he saluted. But it was Captain Phillips whom he saluted, and not the Prince of Chiltistan. Shere Ali spoke, with the same quiet note of confident authority which had surprised Captain Phillips before, to the seven nobles at his back. Then he turned to the Resident.

'I will ride with you to your door,' he said.

The two men passed alone through the gateway and along a broad path which divided the forecourt to the steps of the house. And not a man of all that crowd which followed Shere Ali to Kohara pressed in behind them. Captain Phillips looked back as much in surprise as in relief. But there was no surprise on the face of Shere Ali. He, it was plain, expected obedience.

'Upon my word,' cried Phillips in a burst of admiration, 'you have got your fellows well in hand.'

'I ?' said Shere Ali. 'I am nothing. What could I do who a week ago was still a stranger to my people ? I am a voice, nothing more. But the God of my people speaks through me'; and as he spoke these last words, his voice suddenly rose to a shrill trembling note, his face suddenly quivered with excitement.

Captain Phillips stared. 'The man's in earnest,' he muttered to himself. 'He actually believes it.'

It was the second time that Captain Phillips had been surprised within five minutes, and on this occasion the surprise came upon him with a shock. How it had come about—that was all dark to Captain Phillips. But the result was clear. The few words spoken as they had been spoken revealed the fact. The veneer of Shere Ali's English training had gone. Shere Ali had reverted. His own people had claimed him.

'And I guessed nothing of this,' the Resident reflected bitterly. Signs of trouble he had noticed in abundance, but this one crucial

fact which made trouble a certain and unavoidable thing—that had utterly escaped him. His thoughts went back to the nameless tomb in the courtyard of the fort.

‘Luffe would have known,’ he thought in a very bitter humility. ‘Nay, he did know. He foresaw.’

There was yet a third surprise in store for Captain Phillips. As the two men rode up the broad path, he had noticed that the door of the house was standing open, as it usually did. Now, however, he saw it swing to—very slowly, very noiselessly. He was surprised, for he knew the door to be a strong heavy door of walnut wood, not likely to swing to even in a wind. And there was no wind. Besides, if it had swung to of its own accord, it would have slammed. Its weight would have made it slam. Whereas it was not quite closed. As he reined in his horse at the steps, he saw that there was a chink between the door and the doorpost.

‘There’s someone behind that door,’ he said to himself, and he glanced quietly at Shere Ali. It would be quite in keeping with the Chilti character for Shere Ali politely to escort him home knowing well that an assassin waited behind the door; and it was with a smile of some irony that he listened to Shere Ali taking his leave.

‘You will be safe, so long as you stay within your grounds. I will place a guard about the house. I do not make war against my country’s guests. And in a few days I will send an escort and set you and your attendants free from hurt beyond our borders. But’—and his voice lost its courtesy—‘take care you admit no one, and give shelter to no one.’

The menace of Shere Ali’s tone roused Captain Phillips. ‘I take no orders from your Highness,’ he said firmly. ‘Your Highness may not have noticed that,’ and he pointed upwards to where on a high flagstaff in front of the house the English flag hung against the pole.

‘I give your Excellency no orders,’ replied Shere Ali. ‘But on the other hand I give you a warning. Shelter so much as one man, and that flag will not save you. I should not be able to hold in my men.’

Shere Ali turned and rode back to the gates. Captain Phillips dismounted, and calling forward a reluctant groom, gave him his horse. Then he suddenly flung back the door. But there was no resistance. The door swung in and clattered against the wall. Phillips looked into the hall, but the dusk was gathering in the

garden. He looked into a place of twilight and shadows. He grasped his riding-crop a little more firmly in his hand and strode through the doorway. In a dark corner something moved.

'Ah! would you!' cried Captain Phillips, turning sharply on the instant. He raised his crop above his head, and then a crouching figure fell at his feet and embraced his knees; and a trembling voice of fear cried:

'Save me! Your Excellency will not give me up! I have been a good friend to the English!'

For the second time the Khan of Chiltistan had sought refuge from his own people. Captain Phillips looked round.

'Hush,' he whispered in a startled voice. 'Let me shut the door!'

CHAPTER XXXIII.

IN THE RESIDENCY.

CAPTAIN PHILLIPS with a sharp gesture ordered the Khan back to the shadowy corner from which he had sprung out. Then he shut the door and, with the shutting of the door, the darkness deepened suddenly in the hall. He shot the bolt and put up the chain. It rattled in his ears with a startling loudness. Then he stood without speech or movement. Outside he heard Shere Ali's voice ring clear, and the army of tribesmen clattered past towards the town. The rattle of their weapons, the hum of their voices diminished. Captain Phillips took his handkerchief from his pocket and wiped his forehead. He had the sensations of a man reprieved.

'But it's only a reprieve,' he thought. 'There will be no commutation.'

He turned again towards the dark corner.

'How did you come?' he asked in a low voice.

'By the orchard at the back of the house.'

'Did no one see you?'

'I hid in the orchards until I saw the red coat of one of your servants. I called to him and he let me in secretly. But no one else saw me.'

'No one in the city?'

'I came barefoot in a rough cloak with the hood drawn over my face,' said the Khan. 'No one paid any heed to me. There was much noise and running to and fro, and polishing of weapons. I crept out into the hill-side at the back and so came down into your orchard.'

Captain Phillips shrugged his shoulders. He opened a door and led the Khan into a room which looked out upon the orchard.

'Well, we will do what we can,' he said, 'but it's very little. They will guess immediately that you are here, of course.'

'Once before——' faltered the Khan, and Phillips broke in upon him impatiently.

'Yes, once before. But it's not the same thing. This is a house, not a fort, and I have only a handful to defend it; and I am not Luffe.' Then his voice sharpened. 'Why didn't you listen to him? All this is your fault—yours and Dewes', who didn't understand, and held his tongue.'

The Khan was mystified by the words, but Phillips did not take the trouble to explain. He knew something of the Chilti character. They would have put up with the taxes, with the selling into slavery, with all the other abominations of the Khan's rule. They would have listened to the exhortations of the mullahs without anything coming of it, so long as no leader appeared. They were great accepters of facts as they were. Let the brother or son or nephew murder the ruling Khan and sit in his place, they accepted his rule without any struggles of conscience. But let a man rise to lead them, then they would bethink them of the exhortations of their priests and of their own particular sufferings and flock to his standard. And the man had risen,—just because twenty-five years ago the Khan would not listen to Luffe.

'It's too late, however, for explanations,' he said, and he clapped his hands together for a servant. In a few moments the light of a lamp gleamed in the hall through the doorway. Phillips went quickly out of the room, closing the door behind him.

'Fasten the shutters first,' he said to the servant in the hall. 'Then bring the lamp in.'

The servant obeyed, but when he brought the lamp into the room, and saw the Khan of Chiltistan standing at the table with no more dignity of dress or, indeed, of bearing than any beggar in the kingdom, he nearly let the lamp fall.

'His Highness will stay in this house,' said Phillips, 'but his presence must not be spoken of. Will you tell Poulteney Sahib that I would like to speak to him?' The servant bowed his forehead to the palms of his hands and turned away upon his errand. But Poulteney Sahib was already at the door. He was the subaltern in command of the half company of Sikhs which served Captain Phillips for an escort and a guard.

'You have heard the news, I suppose,' said Phillips.

'Yes,' replied Poulteney. He was a wiry dark youth, with a little black moustache and a brisk manner of speech. 'I was out on the hill after chikkor when my shikari saw Shere Ali and his crowd coming down the valley. He knew all about it and gave me a general idea of the situation. It seems the whole country's rising. I should have been here before, but it seemed advisable to wait until it was dark. I crawled in between a couple of guard-posts. There is already a watch kept on the house,' and then he stopped abruptly. He had caught sight of the Khan in the background. He had much ado not to whistle in his surprise. But he refrained and merely bowed.

'It seems to be a complicated situation,' he said to Captain Phillips. 'Does Shere Ali know?' and he glanced towards the Khan.

'Not yet,' replied Phillips grimly. 'But I don't think it will be long before he does.'

'And then there will be ructions,' Poulteney remarked softly. 'Yes, there will be ructions of a highly coloured and interesting description.'

'We must do what we can,' said Phillips with a shrug of his shoulders. 'It isn't much, of course,' and for the next two hours the twenty-five Sikhs were kept busy. The doors were barricaded, the shutters closed upon the windows and loopholed, and provisions were brought in from the outhouses.

'It is lucky we had sense enough to lay in a store of food,' said Phillips.

The Sikhs were divided into watches and given their appointed places. Cartridges were doled out to them, and the rest of the ammunition was placed in a stone cellar.

'That's all that we can do,' said Phillips. 'So we may as well dine.'

They dined with the Khan, speaking little and with ears on the alert, in a room at the back of the house. At any moment the summons might come to surrender the Khan. They waited for a blow upon the door, the sound of the firing of a rifle or a loud voice calling upon them from the darkness. But all they heard was the interminable babble of the Khan, as he sat at the table shivering with fear and unable to eat a morsel of his food.

'You won't give me up! . . . I have been a good friend to the English. . . . All my life I have been a good friend to the English.'

'We will do what we can,' said Phillips, and he rose from the table and went up on to the roof. He lay down behind the low parapet

and looked over towards the town. The house was a poor place to defend. At the back beyond the orchard the hill-side rose and commanded the roof. On the east of the house a stream ran by to the great river in the centre of the valley. But the bank of the stream was a steep slippery bank of clay, and less than a hundred yards down a small water-mill on the opposite side overlooked it. The Chiltis had only to station a few riflemen in the water-mill, and not a man would be able to climb down that bank and fetch water for the Residency. On the west stood the stables and the storehouses, and the barracks of the Sikhs, a square of buildings which would afford fine cover for an attacking force. Only in front within the walls of the forecourt was there any open space which the house commanded. It was certainly a difficult—nay, a hopeless—place to defend.

But Captain Phillips, as he lay behind the parapet, began to be puzzled. Why did not the attack begin? He looked over to the city. It was a place of tossing lights and wild clamours. The noise of it was carried on the night wind to Phillips' ears. But about the Residency there was quietude and darkness. Here and there a red fire glowed where the guards were posted; now and then a shower of sparks leaped up into the air as a fresh log was thrown upon the ashes; and a bright flame would glisten on the barrel of a rifle and make ruddy the dark faces of the watchmen. But there were no preparations for an attack.

Phillips looked across the city. On the hill the Palace was alive with moving lights—lights that flashed from room to room as though men searched hurriedly.

'Surely they must already have guessed,' he murmured to himself. The moving lights in the high windows of the Palace held his eyes—so swiftly they flitted from room to room, so frenzied seemed the hurry of the search—and then to his astonishment one after another they began to die out. It could not be that the searchers were content with the failure of their search, that the Palace was composing itself to sleep. In the city the clamour had died down; little by little it sank to darkness. There came a freshness in the air. Though there were many hours still before daylight, the night drew on towards morning. What could it mean, he wondered? Why was the Residency left in peace?

And as he wondered, he heard a scuffling noise upon the roof behind him. He turned his head and Poulteney crawled to his side.

'Will you come down?' the subaltern asked; 'I don't know what to do.'

Phillips at once crept back to the trap-door. The two men descended, and Poulteney led the way into the little room at the back of the house where they had dined. There was no longer a light in the room; and they stood for awhile in the darkness listening.

'Where is the Khan?' whispered Phillips.

'I fixed up one of the cellars for him,' Poulteney replied in the same tone, and as he ended there came suddenly a rattle of gravel upon the shutter of the window. It was thrown cautiously, but even so it startled Phillips almost into a cry.

'That's it,' whispered Poulteney. 'There is someone in the orchard. That's the third time the gravel has rattled on the shutter. What shall I do?'

'Have you got your revolver?' asked Phillips.

'Yes.'

'Then stand by.'

Phillips carefully and noiselessly opened the shutter for an inch or two.

'Who's that?' he asked in a low voice; he asked the question in Pushtu, and in Pushtu a voice no louder than his own replied:

'I want to speak to Poulteney Sahib.'

A startled exclamation broke from the subaltern. 'It's my shikari,' he said, and thrusting open the shutter he leaned out.

'Well, what news do you bring?' he asked; and at the answer Captain Phillips for the first time since he had entered into his twilight hall had a throb of hope. The expeditionary troops from Nowshera, advancing by forced marches, were already close to the borders of Chiltistan. News had been brought to the Palace that evening. Shere Ali had started with every man he could collect to take up the position where he meant to give battle.

'I must hurry or I shall be late,' said the shikari, and he crawled away through the orchard.

Phillips closed the shutter again and lit the lamp. The news seemed too good to be true. But the morning broke over a city of women and old men. Only the watchmen remained at their posts about the Residency grounds.

(To be concluded.)

THE POEMS OF MARY COLERIDGE.

MARY ELIZABETH COLERIDGE, who died unexpectedly about two months ago, after a few days of acute illness, is very widely mourned. Her personality was one of those rare combinations of character and intellect whose presence is everywhere beneficent and welcome; nor among all whom she comforted, instructed, encouraged, or amused will there be any who can think of her with more sorrow than is inseparable from mortality. We may imagine how elegantly a Latin epitaph might indulge the superlatives of its Ciceronian solicitude lest the good should be interrèd with her bones; it is better to think how her fragment of life, a good seed of beauty, imperishable as any link of physical cause and effect, must live on by the law which writes our fates in eternity.

But of the little ships that she built and launched, how long will any one of them float on the surging deluge of literature? I am not surprised that some of her friends have already hoisted her flag on the poems; for, though the fact was generally unknown or neglected, Mary Coleridge was a poetess. It was 'Fancy's Following,' a dainty volume of forty-eight short lyrics, privately printed by Mr. Daniel in 1896, that first won her adequate recognition, and gave her real distinction as a writer. His 125 copies, however, must have been distributed almost entirely among her personal friends and the collectors of rare books. In the following year she was persuaded to reprint some of these poems in Mr. Elkin Mathews' 'Shilling Garland'; but this second venture, in which a few new poems appeared, met with so little favour in the market that not half of the edition of 'Fancy's Guerdon,' as she named it, has sold out in ten years, and the book may still be purchased in Vigo Street for twelve pence.

The delicate harmony of special excellences that makes originality, if it does not at once fascinate, is likely by its very strangeness to embarrass the judgment of even a professional connoisseur; and there is no other account to be given of the neglect of these poems, for they are both beautiful and original, and often exhibit imagination of a very rare kind, conveyed by the identical

expression of true feeling and artistic insight. Indeed I have seen it asserted that of all her distinguished family Mary Elizabeth was the one who alone inherited any share of the magic faculty which fruited in 'Christabel' and 'The Ancient Mariner,' nor is the contention absurd. It is likely enough that the smallness of the volume affected the opinion of its importance; and yet forty-eight lyrics, maintaining so high a standard as these, will not be deemed a trifling performance.

They have already proved their vitality by usurping the favoured place in many families where they are known. They were selected from a much larger number, among which were others worthy to rank with them; but the hope of Mary Coleridge's admirers is that, since she wrote continuously to the end of her life, the promised selection from her complete work will be of considerable bulk, and secure her a high position among English lyrical poets.

Besides her bold and somewhat capricious imagination, with its natural and simple expression, the qualities which Mary Coleridge brought to her poetry, so far as I can analyse or tabulate them, were a great literary appetite, knowledge, and memory—a wide sympathy, tenderness of feeling, and profound spirituality—and a humour without which such seriousness and devotion of life as were hers can hardly be made palatable in literature. Her humour was almost superabundant, and in her social life supplied deep roots to that luxuriant merriment and fun which brightly coloured all her conversation and letters when there was nothing to forbid their play.

She was in no sense a blue-stockings. She did not write poems because she had learned the grammar of verse, nor because she thought she had valuable moral lessons for well-intentioned people. Her poetry is the irrepressible song of a fancy whose vagaries she would have thought it impertinent to analyse; and, although these records of her soul were so sacred to her that she would hardly show them to her most intimate friends, she did not appear to set any great value on them. They are at once sincere and mysterious, so that 'Fancy's Following' is apt to give a reader the impression that its author had some desperate life-secret for the spring of her inspiration, and that she would reveal it only in enigma.

I have forged me in seven-fold heats
A shield from foes and lovers,
And no one knows the heart that beats
Beneath the shield that covers.

If I had met with that in Heine's 'Buch der Lieder,' I think I should have noted it for its excellence, certainly not have distinguished it for difference; and the same might be said of some other lyrics in this book; but most of those that recall Heine's manner add something to it. The following poem is called

A MOMENT

The clouds had made a crimson crown
Above the mountains high,
The stormy sun was going down
In a stormy sky.

Why did you let your eyes so rest on me,
And hold your breath between?
In all the ages this can never be
As if it had not been.

These quotations will justify the inevitable reference to Heine, and there are other points of contact where Miss Coleridge will sustain some comparison; but it must be understood that she was not in any way a copyist or imitator of Heine; nor was she more comparable with him in conscious artistic fabrication than in spiritual likeness. Heine's file was as full of genius as his soul, so that, like Beethoven, the more he retouched his work the nearer it approached the perfect ease of spontaneity; and his attainment in his very best songs seems to show the boundary of what was possible in his material. His workmanship is so definite and clean and measured that the flaws appear as inevitable incommodities of the German language; he set himself above rivalry, and yet Mary Coleridge has often the same kind of masterful ease, while the facility with which his form adapts itself to varieties of mood and subject has also its counterpart in her work. To take only one well-marked class for example, I would cite the many poems which, like 'Im wunderschönen Monat Mai,' revivify and etherealise the popular poetry of the fourteenth century, with its everlasting topic of love and springtime, where the seasons are used as landscape for the elemental human passions, preserved to us in such *namenlose Lieder* as the following:

Ich wil trûren varen lân.
Uf die heide sul wir gân,
Ir wil liebe gespilen mîn:
Dâ seh wir der bluomen schîn.
Ich sage dir, ich sage dir,
Mîn geselle, kum mit mir.

Süeze Minne, râme mîn,
 Mache mir ein krenzelin :
 Das sol tragen ein stolzer man,
 Der wol wiben dienen kan.
 Ich sage dir, ich sage dir,
 Min geselle, kum mit mir.

In this universal type Miss Coleridge is equally modern, successful, and original. The last poem quoted from her is an example, but this is simpler :

When wintry winds are no more heard,
 And joy's in every bosom,
 When summer sings in every bird,
 And shines in every blossom,
 When happy twilight hours are long,
 Come home, my love, and think no wrong !

When berries gleam above the stream
 And half the fields are yellow,
 Come back to me, my joyous dream,
 The world hath not thy fellow !
 And I will make thee Queen among
 The Queens of summer and of song.

And this same facility she exhibits in many varieties of matter; but, not to press the likeness further, it is just where Heine shows defect that Miss Coleridge is rich. If the shield which Heine forged to hide his heart was of finer workmanship than hers, it is not only because of its beauty that we do not desire to thrust it aside; and though it would be unjust to him to say that he is not spiritual, yet he is often contemptuous and infected with a cynicism—to use an old word in its modern sense—which is antagonistic to what is spiritual.

It may be difficult to say what the artistic requirements of modern poetry are or should be, but two things stand out, namely, the Greek attainment and the Christian ideal; and art which nowadays neglects either of these is imperfect; that is, it will not command our highest love, nor satisfy our best intelligence. Heine, I think, for all his incomparable beauty and tenderness, manifestly falls short of the Christian ideal. Where, for instance, he proclaims himself *ein Ritter von dem Heiligen Geist*, though the metaphor correctly gives his meaning, and exactly serves his purpose, and is in a sense profoundly true, yet it is plain that in his mouth the expression loses all its glamour and the beauty proper to the idea. Compare the half-jocular self-assertion of his devotion to the good of mankind with the following :

I may not call what many call divine,
And yet my faith is faith in its degree ;
I worship at a dim and lonely shrine
On bended knee.

The secret grace of faith's celestial part
I hoard up safely for my own self's own ;
Within the hidden chambers of my heart
I love alone.

This poem, so far as the distinction has meaning, exhibits ideal rather than idealised love. It may be called a religious poem ; but the attitude of the poetess is generally the same in poems which could not be called religious. Almost any one of her lyrics would illustrate it, but the following sonnet must be preferred here for the sake of its matter :

True to myself am I, and false to all.
Fear, sorrow, love, constrain us till we die.
But when the lips betray the spirit's cry,
The will, that should be sovereign, is a thrall.
Therefore let terror slay me, ere I call
For aid of men. Let grief begrudge a sigh.
'Are you afraid ?—unhappy ?' 'No !' The lie
About the shrinking truth stands like a wall.
'And have you loved ?' 'No, never !' All the while
The heart within my flesh is turned to stone.
Yea, none the less that I account it vile,
The heart within my heart makes speechless moan ;
And when they see one face, one face alone,
The stern eyes of the soul are moved to smile.

Her wide spiritual outlook is very like Dixon,¹ a poet so absolutely different from Heine that it is worth while to compare

¹ Richard Watson Dixon was a very unequal poet, but that does not affect the merit of his best work ; it would be easy to make extracts from Shelley, or Wordsworth, or from Shakespeare himself to prove that they were no true poets. But how is it that 'The Oxford Book of Verse' (1900), in spite of its curious catholicity, gives no poem of Dixon's ? How was it that *The Golden Treasury* of 1861 contained no poem by Blake, whose *Songs of Innocence* was published in 1783 ? And its anthologist, Francis Turner Palgrave, boasted the collaboration of Tennyson. Mr. Palgrave represented the *élite* of the prosperous criticism of his day, the essence of literary journalism ; and he was for ten years adhesively Professor of Poetry at Oxford. It now is deemed correct for such critics to set Blake's poems alongside of Shakespeare's. Mr. Palgrave aged more slowly than his opinions, and if he allowed the doors of his treasury to yield at last to external pressure, yet the selection of his ultimate revise, which admitted a few of Blake's poems, shows that he had no true appreciation of them. It was Rossetti and Swinburne who called attention to Blake, and they have done the same for Dixon.

the following poem by him with the two poems quoted on p. 597. The solitary gives the landscape without the figures.

The feathers of the willow
Are half of them grown yellow
Above the swelling stream ;
And ragged are the bushes
And rusty now the rushes,
And wild the clouded gleam.

The thistle now is older,
His stalk begins to moulder,
His head is white as snow ;
The branches all are barer,
The linnet's song is rarer,
The robin pipeth now.

Mary Coleridge owed much to Dixon, and her admiration for his work was mutually returned ; they became personal friends, and it is to be regretted that the correspondence which passed between these contemporary poets can never be printed, for they were both good letter-writers, and can have discoursed to each other only on the most worthy topics. The paper called *The Last Hermit of Warkworth* (published in 'Non Sequitur') tells fully of their poetic sympathy ; indeed, for the combination of spirituality, humility, imagination, and humour there can hardly have been two persons more similarly gifted. One distinction should perhaps be drawn, and that is that Dixon's humility was superhuman : it mantled such a vast imperious nature that his modesty might have been suspected of pride had it not seemed a gross anthropomorphism to suspect him of anything ; otherwise, if persons can be analysed into qualities, there appeared in these particulars as exact a likeness as one could look for ; and I have insisted on it in order to draw out what seemed a characteristic idiosyncrasy in Mary Coleridge. For, if the words which I have used, imagination, spirituality, humour, humility, mean to the reader what they do to me, he will, I think, agree that the composition of these qualities implies a melancholic temper : this is their logical consequence, and Dixon had the corresponding melancholy to the full ; but Mary Coleridge was sanguine and merry. From the sonnet given above one may infer that being afraid of melancholy she cultivated lightheartedness for disguise and distraction, and this is true ; but the warring principles thus pitted against each other must have been equally strong. The analysis may have served to define the difficulty, which may be reduced to this, namely, that it is

possible for a wide, light-hearted, active enjoyment of life to co-exist in the same person with an intellectual imagination so pertinacious and tyrannous as to make any life which implied thought appear evil and intolerable. For those two things coexisted in Mary Coleridge.

Blake, it may occur to one, showed something of this disposition, that is, he associated spirituality and active imagination with a cheerful happiness. But we call him a visionary, and mean by that, that he was overmastered by clear, internal presentations in which he had unshaken faith and took great pleasure; and this is altogether different from the imaginations of questioning thought. Blake was always a favourite poet with Miss Coleridge, and she is often very like him both in matter and manner, as will be recognised in these two poems from 'Fancy's Following':

THE WITCH.

'I have walked a great while over the snow,
And I am not tall nor strong.
My clothes are wet, and my teeth are set,
And the way was hard and long.
I have wandered over the fruitful earth,
But I never came here before.
O lift me over the threshold, and let me in at the door !

'The cutting wind is a cruel foe.
I dare not stand in the blast.
My hands are stone, and my voice a groan,
And the worst of death is past.
I am but a little maiden still,
My little white feet are sore.
O lift me over the threshold, and let me in at the door !'

Her voice was the voice that women have,
Who plead for their heart's desire.
She came—she came—and the quivering flame
Sank and died in the fire.
It never was lit again on my hearth
Since I hurried across the floor,
To lift her over the threshold, and let her in at the door.

MASTER AND GUEST.

There came a man across the moor,
Fell and foul of face was he.
He left the path by the cross-roads three,
And stood in the shadow of the door.

I asked him in to bed and board.
I never hated any man so.
He said he could not say me No.
He sat in the seat of my own dear lord.

'Now sit you by my side!' he said,
 'Else may I neither eat nor drink.
 You would not have me starve, I think.'
 He ate the offerings of the dead.

'I'll light you to your bed,' quoth I.
 'My bed is yours—but light the way!'
 I might not turn aside nor stay;
 I showed him where we twain did lie.

The cock was trumpeting the morn.
 He said, 'Sweet love, a long farewell!
 You have kissed a citizen of Hell,
 And a soul was doomed when you were born.

'Mourn, mourn no longer for your dear!
 Him may you never meet above.
 The gifts that Love hath given to Love,
 Love gives away again to Fear.'

I have compared the poems in 'Fancy's Following' with Blake, Heine, and Dixon, and it is likely enough that they may generally be considered as nearer to Blake than to either of the others. In the two poems last quoted we have vivid pictures, presumably intended to convey a meaning which, however, partly escapes us; and, besides the absolute contradictions which will no doubt appear in poems written in all kinds of moods over a period of more than twenty years, readers of Mary Coleridge will also have to expect this sort of obscurity. I will let her speak for herself. She is defending her old liking for a poem in which a romantic effect was apparently sought by the sound of nonsensical verses:

What do they mean?

Fatal question! There is no defence. It is no easier to say now what they mean than it was then; yet is the charm as strong. What does Maeterlinck mean, and Verlaine? What did Morris mean in his glorious youth when he was not the *idle singer of an empty day*, but the lark that sang the dawn? What did Shakespeare mean when he wrote the Fool's Song at the end of 'Twelfth Night'?

Meaning is to poetry what morals are to life. As in the lives of those who live best there are exquisite moments when life is life alone, so now and again poets forget to be anything else. No one except a poet could write such nonsense as this.

This defence of 'nonsense' covers more than we demand, for poems like 'The Witch' are not nonsense. If they are objected to on the score of nonsense, all that the objector can mean is that they convey to him no *definite* idea; and if this objection be examined it crumbles away as we are driven to admit that by *definite idea* we mean very often only an idea that has a recognised name; and the best named ideas are often very shadowy. Such poems as these

are sometimes more or less allegorical, and in so far are but one step above the old Greek riddle in which a simple object is described in paradoxical terms ; but the best of them have little or nothing of this : they are truly imaginative constructions. Suppose that in a dream one should receive a very strong intellectual impression which one found it impossible to reduce to words. This is not uncommon. Suppose then that by reconstructing the dream one could reproduce in oneself something of this elusive intellectual impression ; then if a description of the visions that produced the idea were written down—say, a poem made of them—one might use such a poem for oneself to reproduce the inexpressible idea. But such a description might not provoke exactly the same idea in others ; the art of doing that is, I suppose, an ‘ occult ’ art. Now the poems with which we are dealing may be very much in this condition ; it is a misunderstanding that shies at them, for in so far as they do provoke definite feelings or other effects they are works of imagination.

The term ‘ imagination,’ which I have so frequently used, demands definition. Of what sort was Mary Coleridge’s imagination ? The answer would not be easy if she had not given it herself. In the essay on ‘ Words ’ she writes thus :

It is because they cannot think, that infants are happy, despite internal sufferings and coercive treatment from without which would cause a person of riper years to commit suicide. It is because in sleep we cannot think, or only think distortedly, that in sleep we are happy. Distorted thinking is sometimes, not always, less wearisome than that unceasing rush of trivial images through the brain, which, for want of a saner word, we call thinking when awake. In certain moods the thought of thought eternal will even drive us to curse our immortality ; we should be ready to sell that inalienable and oppressive birthright for the condition of a stone. More grateful to our ears than *There shall be no night there is The night cometh*. We wish that death would indeed come not as a new dawn, but like the end of day, bringing with it the same exquisite sense of freedom from the endless spinning and weaving of the intellect. To some this remedy of the quiet fall of darkness may appear more soothing than sleep itself, inasmuch as we are more conscious of happy influence. It gives us over to the life of feeling. It mesmerises the brain, yet leaves the rest of the man awake. . . . Sleep, then, is one specific against reflection, and darkness is another.

Now though this does not distinguish between *thoughts* and *images*, and though a line cannot be drawn between them, it will make things clearer if we separate them, and suppose two kinds of imagination, one intellectual, of thoughts ; the other sensuous, of images ; the first of these so unpleasant and wearisome that she longed to escape from it ; the second pleasant, a respite from the

first, and of the nature of dreaming. One is her normal condition by day, the other her normal condition in darkness and sleep. The distinction seems to be recognised in the following passage from 'The Seven Sleepers' (I italicise the words) :

Action is much faster than narrative, and *thoughts* are much slower ; not slower in reality, but slower because of the enormous multitude clustering, like bees, upon a single thread, of which it is impossible to give any idea in words. Especially in darkness does it appear impossible, for the brain works uninterruptedly, receiving no suggestion from without, and the host of *images* presented becomes so vast that it cannot follow or recollect them itself in daylight.

This is a plain description of her own experience, and the book from which it is taken is one long illustration of an overflowing wealth of suggestion which baffled her selection. Her imagination was largely of the intellectual type, and it would seem that every fresh edge of thought, as it arose in her mind, was besieged by a thousand lesser thoughts, like a magnetised knife-blade covered with iron filings. And the picture of her mind would be the sea as it appears when there is a breeze off shore, and every wave that arises is crowned by a million of bursting bubbles, and travels on trailing a white mane of foam down its back. The actual condition must be common to all thought ; it is the excess and vivid conscious perception of it that constitutes this 'imagination.' I can remember that, when first I knew her, I supposed that she did not recognise the necessary artistic limits of imagination ; but I am sure that it was the number and activity of her thoughts that embarrassed her, any one of them seeming to lead anywhere, and offering, therefore, a delusive promise of return ; and it was in this that her chief difficulty of composition lay. The first essay in 'Non Sequitur,' indeed its strange title, and the stranger *ἀνοδος* of 'Fancy's Following' all bear witness to the author being conscious of this inconsequent quality or quantity of her fancy. 'Any-one can begin,' she writes, in happy disregard of the proverbial difficulty of beginning. She once sent me the beginnings of three separate stories, asking me what could be done with them. Two of them were magically interesting. After puzzling over the problem I was constrained to say that nothing more could be made of them ; she had written up to an *impasse* ; continuation was impossible, as indeed she had found it ; and I heard the other day that Robert Louis Stevenson made a like remark when he had read a little way into 'The Seven Sleepers.' I was told that he said, 'The young lady is devilish clever, but she will be more than that if she

gets through with her story.' With regard to the unfinished tales I tried to persuade her to leave them unfinished and write some more. Why should the story end? What does it matter? Better to break off than to break down. But since I would not presume to judge romance, let us provisionally hearken to Stevenson again; for he was both artist and professor. He, in his excellent 'Gossip on Romance,' has written thus:

The early part of 'Monte Cristo,' down to the finding of the treasure, is a piece of perfect story-telling; the man never breathed who shared those moving incidents without a tremor. . . . The sequel is one long-drawn error, gloomy, bloody, unnatural, and dull; but as for those early chapters I do not believe there is another volume extant where you can breathe the same unmingled atmosphere of romance.

What, then, is the use or value of that sequel? Would not the book have been at least as good if it had left off before it began to be so bad? It is better for a man to have poor legs than none, but it is worse in a statue. Besides, a story is good in proportion to its interest, and if there is a certain kind of interest which can only be given on the condition that the story shall not be forced to wind up, why trouble ourselves with the pedantry of an orthodox *dénouement*? Agreed that a good artistic story-teller should and will begin to build so that he shall be able to finish; but if this limits him in his initial procedure, and he might have been for the time more interesting if he had disregarded the tangle that he was weaving, I for my part prefer my delectation to his scholastic scruples, and I believe that there are many who will agree with me that there is plenty of room for unfinished tales. That wonderful first book, 'The Seven Sleepers of Ephesus,' will illustrate all these points. The conclusion is not altogether satisfactory, but I do not know that one should complain of it; it is certainly better than one could expect. The whole book is of course somewhat uncomfortable. Never to have any notion of what will happen next, and not quite understanding everything that does happen; not to be within hail of a guess as to what anyone will reply to whatever may be said to him; to push on through a tangle of intellectual surprises, and watch it grow portentously more and more inextricable and complex—all this, in spite of the unflagging brilliance and freshness, is somewhat uncomfortable. But there is a discomfort in galloping over rough country if you consider the essence of ease, or compare the exercise with sitting in an armchair by the fire when you have come home fatigued. Comfort or discomfort, the pastime of that book was a delicious

refreshment to me compared with the suburban paralysis of some average romance, where the only poor surprise is that anyone should have been at the pains to write it.

And it is to this very same profusion of imagination that she owes her justness and balance and the light touch which never dwells too long nor labours on a reflection. In the following passage the brilliant condensation is more effective than a mile of sermons ; and how forcibly true is the *momentary* sadness which the winged thought gave to Victorine ; it is gone as quickly as it came, like a fly that had settled on her hand.

The stars were sparkling up above, the lights of the city deep down below in the river.

‘ Beautiful,’ she said, gazing.

And even as she gazed a momentary sadness overcame her at the thought that, out of the many thousand people congregated there, she only was enjoying the scene. The lamps and candles that made those curving lines, those fairy zigzags for her pleasure, were shining by sick-beds, in factories restless with the unceasing toil of wearied workers—in chambers so lonely that sleep would not enter them, so full of busy wickedness that they had no leisure to be dark.

If this is a specimen of her prose, can her poetry be better ? Well, the imagination that inspires both is the famous winged horse, which, though it could bear her easily on the level, did not always rein well ; but in her lyric flights, the unrestrained mountings of her soul, it was one with herself. And it is the intimacy and spontaneity of her poems that will give them their chief value. They will be her portrait, an absolutely truthful picture of a wondrously beautiful and gifted spirit, whom thought could not make melancholy, nor sorrow sad ; not in conventional attitude, nor with fixed features, nor lightly to be interpreted, nor even always to be understood, but mystical rather and enigmatical ; a poetic effigy, the only likeness of worth ; a music self-born of her contact with the wisdom and passion of the world, and which all the folly and misery of man could provoke only to gentle and loving strains.

Is this wide world not large enough to fill thee,
Nor Nature, nor that deep man’s Nature, Art ?
Are they too thin, too weak and poor to still thee,
Thou little heart ?

Dust art thou, and to dust again returnest,
A spark of fire within a beating clod.
Should that be infinite for which thou burnest ?
Must it be God ?

ROBERT BRIDGES.

THE MAN IN THE IRON CAGE.

IN 1823, in 'Accredited Ghost Stories,' by T. M. Jarvis, appeared an extraordinary story of an apparition that was seen by an English family at Lille in French Flanders; and in 1853 Mrs. Crowe, in her 'Night Side of Nature,' published a letter that professed to have been written to her by one member of that family, giving full particulars. But she did not give the name of her correspondent, nor of the persons mixed up in this strange affair. As an exact transcript of the original letter has recently passed through my hands, I can give particulars of the persons mentioned in it as well as the whole letter verbatim. And it may be noted that Mrs. Crowe paraphrased the letter and took other liberties with it.

The correspondent was Elizabeth Pennyman, eldest daughter of Sir James Pennyman, of Ormsby Hall, Yorkshire, sixth baronet, and her mother, of whom mention is made in the letter, was Elizabeth, sister of Charles, first Earl Grey.

Sir James Pennyman, who died in 1808, had six sons, but of these five died without issue. He was succeeded in the title by his son, William Henry, who was the last baronet, and who died in 1852. He had four daughters: Elizabeth, born in 1765, Hannah, and Charlotte, the last of whom married Charles, son of Sir George Robinson; and finally Frances, who married Charles John Berkeley.

In the letter Elizabeth speaks of her mother, and of her brothers William Henry and Charles, who was born in 1770. Another person mentioned, who also saw the ghost, is Mrs. Atkyns, living near Lille in 1786, along with her husband and son. This lady was the youngest daughter of Robert Walpole, who died in 1803. Her name was Charlotte, and as her father was not well off, she quitted Norfolk at the age of nineteen, and appeared on the stage of Drury Lane at the opening of the season in October 1777, in Isaac Bickerstaff's opera 'Love in a Village.' Then she acted Jessica in 'The Merchant of Venice,' and in 1778 in 'The Waterman.' In the May of that year 'Love in a Village' was given for her benefit, she acting and singing in the part of Rosetta. The season concluded with 'The Beggar's Opera.' That over, she

returned to Norfolk, but reappeared on the Drury Lane stage during the season of 1778-9; and on June 18, 1779, was married to Edward Atkyns, of Ketteringham Hall, Norfolk. By her husband she had but one son, who is mentioned in the letter.

Charlotte Atkyns was a remarkable woman; she became very intimate with Queen Marie Antoinette; but though much in Paris and about the court at Versailles, the Atkyns family made Lille their headquarters. She lost her husband in 1794, and died herself in February 1835. She is alluded to in Lady Jerningham's correspondence. That which is of most interest in the life of Mrs. Atkyns is her heroic attempt, first of all to save the life of Marie Antoinette when a prisoner in the Temple by exchanging clothes with her, and then by her endeavour to smuggle away the Dauphin. Her history at this period has been given by Barbey: 'Mme. Atkyns et la Prison du Temple,' Paris, 1905.

Ketteringham Hall, a noble mansion in a fine park, passed away from the Atkyns family; it was bought in 1836 by J. P. Boileau, who was created a baronet in 1836. The church contains several monuments of the Atkyns family. Charlotte died in France, but her body was removed to Ketteringham. Her portrait in miniature has been preserved, and is reproduced by Barbey in his Memoir.

The son, Wright Edward Atkyns, captain in the Royal Dragoons, died unmarried, November 16, 1804.

This is the letter of Miss Elizabeth Pennyman:

'As you expressed a wish to know what degree of credit may be given to a garbled tale, which has most astonishingly been sent forth after a lapse of between thirty and forty years, as "an accredited ghost story,"¹ I will state the facts as recalled to my mind about a year ago, by an old friend, a daughter of Sir W. à Court; she sent me the album in which it first appeared, requesting me to read it and tell her if there was *any degree* of truth in it, for, as she had been intimate with my mother and whole family, and she had never heard it mentioned, she did not believe a word of it. I did read it with the greatest surprise, for it was clear it came from one who had not been in the family at the time, or, indeed, intimate with us, as it was full of mistakes in names, etc., yet in some parts came so near the truth, it quite puzzled me.

'So many years had elapsed, and so many things arisen to drive it from my mind, I had some trouble in recalling exactly what did

¹ This refers to the account by Mr. T. M. Jarvis.

pass—which, however, I succeeded in doing. So that I can now do it with ease for your satisfaction.

‘Sir James and my mother, with myself and one brother (Charles, who was too young for college, and near the head of Westminster), went abroad towards the end of the year 1786. After being in two or three towns, we found the masters to be particularly good at Lille, and having letters to the Commandant, as also some of the best French families in the neighbourhood, we determined to settle there.

‘We got at first into a bad, uncomfortable lodging, where Sir James left us, looking about for a house. We shortly found a very large good family hotel which we liked much, and very cheap, even for that part of the world.

‘We went into it immediately, and about three weeks after, I walked with my mother to the banker’s, with Sir Robert Herries’s letter of credit, to get some money, which being all paid in the great six francs, we could not take. He said he would send his clerk, and asked our address. We told him our hotel was in the Place du Lion d’Or. He looked surprised, and said there was no house there that would suit our family, except indeed the one that had been long unlet, on account of the *revenant* that walked about it. (He said this with quite a serious countenance, and in his natural tone of voice.) We both laughed, and were quite entertained with it, but requested the clerk not to name it to the servants, and we agreed as we walked home not to say a word on the subject before them. My mother added, laughing, “I suppose, Bessy, ’tis the *ghost* that has waked us, walking over our heads.” I slept with her, and we had been waked by a heavy slow step overhead three or four times, and imagined it to be one of the menservants. We had three Englishmen, a footman (who had lived years with us), a coachman, and a groom; three Englishwomen, my mother’s maid and housekeeper (Creswell), my maid, and Alice (the nursery maid). All these English servants returned to England with us, and never had the *least idea* of leaving us. The rest of the women in the house were French, and we had four Frenchmen, a butler, cook, footman, and Louis (a boy who came home with us).

‘A few days after we came from the banker’s, having been again waked by *the step*, my mother asked Creswell who slept in the room over us. She answered, “No one, my lady, ’tis a large empty garret.” About a week or ten days after this Creswell came one morning after breakfast and told my mother most of the French

servants talked of going away, because there was a *revenant* in the house, "and indeed, my lady, there is a very strange story about a young man who was heir to this and another house, with an estate in the country, and who, they say, was confined by an uncle in an iron cage in this house, and as he disappeared, and was never seen after, they suppose he was killed here. The uncle left the house in a hurry, and sold it to the man's father of whom we took it, for very little. No one ever remained in it so long as we have done (about a month), and it has been a long time without a tenant." "And you believe this, Creswell, do you?" was my mother's answer. "Well, the iron cage is in the garret over your head, my lady, at all events, and I wish you would all come up and see it."

'Just as this passed, an old officer with the cross of St. Louis, a great friend of ours, came in. We told him the story laughing, and asked him to go upstairs with us to see this *cage*, which he did.

'It was a long, large garret, with bare brick walls, and nothing in it, but in the further corner there was an *iron cage*, attached to the wall—such as you see wild beasts in, only higher. It was about four feet square and eight feet high. There was an iron ring in the wall at the back, to which was an old rusty chain, with a collar. It certainly made one's flesh creep to look at such a horrid place of confinement, with the idea that any human being could ever have been in it. Our old friend expressed as much horror as ourselves, as he said, it had assuredly been constructed to confine some poor wretch. We all agreed that the noises and walking about was some plan to keep the house untenanted; that it was not at all pleasant to be in a house that could be entered by some private unknown way. Therefore we should certainly look about for another, and remain quiet till we succeeded.

'About ten days after this determination, Creswell, when she came to dress my mother in the morning, looked very pale and ill, and when asked what was the matter, said, "Indeed, my lady, we have been frightened to death, and neither Mrs. Marsh (my maid) nor myself can sleep again in the room we are now in." "Well," my mother said, "you may come and sleep in the little spare room next to ours; but what has alarmed you?" "Someone, my lady, went through our room in the night. We both saw the figure, but covered ourselves with the bedclothes and lay in a dreadful fright till this morning." I could not help laughing which made Creswell cry. When I saw her so nervous, I tried to

comfort her, told her I had heard of a very good house, and we should soon be out of that; and in the meantime they were to come to the room next to us. This room, in which they had been so frightened, had a door recessed from the first landing-place of a very wide staircase, which led to a large, wide passage, that all the best rooms came into.

'My mother's room door faced the staircase. In the room Creswell had left there was another door which led to the back stairs, so that it was a passage room.

'A few nights after the women had changed their room, my mother said she wished Charles and I would go to her room and fetch down her long frame, that she might make her work ready for the morning. (It was some time after supper.) We immediately went, without a candle, as there was a lamp at the bottom of the staircase, which would enable us to find the frame by leaving the door of my mother's room open. As we got to the stairs we saw a tall, thin figure, in a powdering gown, and hair down the back, going upstairs before us. We both at once thought it was Hannah,¹ and called out "It won't do, Hannah, you can't frighten us." As we said this the figure turned into the recess, and as we saw nothing there as we passed it, we concluded she had gone through and down the back staircase. We ran down with the frame, and, laughing, told my mother of Hannah's fun, who said, "It is very odd, for Hannah went to bed with the toothache before you came in from your walk." We directly went together to Hannah's room, found Alice at work there, who told us Miss Hannah had never moved, and been sound asleep above an hour. I named what had passed, and our surprise to find it was not my sister, as we were going to bed, to Creswell, who turned quite white, and said, "*That* was exactly the figure they saw."

'About this time Harry² came to spend ten days with us. He slept up another pair of stairs, at the other end of the house. A morning or two after, when he came to breakfast, he asked my mother in an angry way if she was afraid he was drunk and could not put his candle out, as she sent some of those French rascals to watch him. He added: "I jumped up last night and opened my door, and by the moon through the skylight I saw the fellow in his loose gown, at the bottom of the stairs. If I had had

¹ Hannah, the sister of Elizabeth, the writer of this account.

² William Henry, who succeeded to the Baronetcy. Charles, the youngest died without issue.

anything on, I would have been after him with my hanger, and given him enough of coming to watch me."

'My mother assured him she had not sent anyone to watch him. That very day we settled to take a delightful house with a charming garden, which belonged to a young nobleman who was going to Italy for a few years. He was to leave it the next morning, and we agreed to go in the week following.

'An evening or two after this a Mr. and Mrs. Atkyns with their son came on horseback to call upon us. (They lived three or four English miles from Lille.) We talked over the fright of our servants, and the very disagreeable thing it was to be in a house where a person might get in, by means we could not discover, on purpose to frighten people, and named the alarm of Creswell and my maid, since which no one would sleep in that room. Mrs. Atkyns laughed, and said she should much like to sleep there, if my mother would allow her, and that with her terrier she could not fear any *revenant*. My mother replied she would have no objection, upon which she (*i.e.* Mrs. Atkyns) requested Mr. Atkyns to ride home with the boy immediately, that she might get her things before the gates shut. He answered with a smile, "You are mighty bold, I think, but I will go and send them directly."

'In the morning Mrs. Atkyns looked ill, and as if she had not slept *much*. We asked if she had been frightened. She declared she had been awakened from a sound sleep by something moving in her room, that, by the lamp in the chimney, she saw most distinctly a figure, and that the dog never moved, and he generally flew at anything, and said much about her attempting to make him. We certainly gave her credit for being too frightened to think about the dog, and we were entertained, when Mr. Atkyns came to ride home with her, at his droll way of saying, "You perhaps dreamt it all?" At which she was very angry.

'We said nothing, though we really thought she might have seen something, and after they were gone, my mother said, as she had often done, "I cannot for one instant fancy it a ghost, but I most sincerely hope I shall get out of the house without seeing what seems to frighten people so much—indeed, to see any person in my room at night, which I know would alarm me dreadfully."

'Three days before we were to go into the count's house I had been a long ride, and went to bed tired; it was hot weather, and the curtains of our bed were undrawn on my side and at the foot.

I was waked from a sound sleep, though I could not say what waked me—we had got so used to the step overhead that it now never waked my mother or myself. There was a light in the room always, and in turning round I saw a tall, thin figure, in the long gown, with an arm rested upon the chest of drawers, that stood between a window and the door, with the face towards me, a long, thin, pale young face (with a melancholy look I could never forget). I felt certainly *very much frightened*, but my great horror was my mother waking. I turned gently towards her, and heard her breathing high in a sound sleep. The clock on the stairs struck four, and I lay perhaps nearly an hour before I *dared look* again towards the drawers. When I did take courage to do so, there was nothing, though I never heard the door opened or shut or any noise. I never shut my eyes after, and lay quiet till Creswell came as usual to the door, when I called out, “I need not get up to let you in, for you must have forgot to put the key upon the drawers last night” (the usual way in France of securing your door). She said she had not, and to my surprise, when I got up, I found it in the usual place. I told my mother, who was most grateful that she had not waked, and praised me for my resolution in not waking her; but as she was always my first object there was nothing surprising in that. She determined not to run the risk another night, and we set about moving everything the moment we had breakfasted, and went to sleep in our new hotel that night.

‘Before we went, Creswell and I examined every part of our room, but could not discover any place that opened.

‘The horrors of the French Revolution, and various difficulties of our own, &c., coming on so soon, we lost sight of our *revenant* and never thought about it. Except once that my mother made me tell it to Mrs. Hoare one winter evening at Duryard (near Exeter), I do not think it has been mentioned, so that the author of the story must have heard it from some French person. There are so many blunders in the tale sent forth, though so near the fact.’

Such is the letter that Mrs. Crowe paraphrased rather than transcribed, and from which she made large excisions.

The Place du Lion d’Or at Lille is small, and still contains some ancient houses, once of consequence, but now that the Place is a mere market square they have degenerated to shops, and are let out in apartments. Two of the houses are more important than the rest, but one of these, formerly an inn at which the diligences stopped,

does not tally with the description given by Miss Pennyman. The other, which is almost certainly the house that the Pennymans occupied, has the basement converted into a game and poulterer's shop, and all the upper rooms are let to individuals and small families as apartments. The poulterer professes never to have heard of the ghost, and what has become of the iron cage is now unknown.

S. BARING-GOULD.

THE CAMPAIGNS OF 1807.

THE celebration of military anniversaries is perhaps more largely practised on the Continent than in this country, especially by the Germans, whose love of historical research is quickened by the necessity of discovering antidotes against the antimilitarist and antimonarchical tendencies of some sections of the modern democracy. Such, it need hardly be said, is not the object of this article. In recalling the campaigns of Eylau and Friedland, of which this year is the hundredth anniversary, the following pages simply have in view the discussion of some of their more prominent features, both on account of their intrinsic interest, and for the sake of the problems they present to the military student. The last acts in the mighty military drama which began on the banks of the Rhine and ended on those of the Memel are of peculiar importance; nor is the practical utility of their study greatly lessened by the fact that the conditions under which the armies fought are passing, or have already passed away. For in these campaigns, more perhaps than in any others of the period, we see emerge those great permanent phenomena of all war, dissimilarity of the contending hosts, influence of the unexpected, inequality of the commanders, play of geographical and political conditions—factors which text-book writers, in their search for positive and universal truth, vainly seek to eliminate from their systems, and which reappear again and again to stultify their conclusions and to decide the fate of empires.

If after the campaign of Jena military thinkers had known what we know of the events of the years 1805-6, if their estimate of Napoleon had been then what ours is to-day, it is probable that the vast majority of critics would have foretold a gigantic and certain success for the French arms in the approaching war with Russia. Never perhaps in modern times were two armies more unlike in organisation, in personnel, in leadership than the Grand Army and the army of the Czar. The Russian army throughout the war was numerically inferior to its opponents in a degree which varied roughly from one-third to one-half. Throughout the war it was miserably fed and supplied; its organisation in divisions

was cumbrous ; its capacity for large and rapid manœuvre, whether on the field of battle or off it, was slight. Its leaders were for the most part unintelligent, idle, and ignorant, nearly all were callously indifferent to the welfare of their men, and many of the higher officers had grown up in that atmosphere of court intrigue and corruption which still exercises so weighty an influence on the history of their country. Benningsen himself, though gifted with many soldierly qualities, and enjoying the confidence of his sovereign, did not possess the iron will and the intellectual ascendancy necessary to silence the disloyal, to convince the doubting, to retemper the metal of his instrument. The spirit of Suvaroff had departed, and with it had gone the power of arousing the enthusiasm of the common soldier, and the unbending resolution which shrinks from no loss and yields to no obstacle. Finally, as though to complete the embarrassments arising from his own army, Benningsen found himself yoked to the wavering spirit and diminished resources of the Prussian monarch, whose remaining troops were committed to the aged hands of Lestocq, and whose dominant strategic idea was the protection of Königsberg, the last great city which he could call his own.

Opposed to this inefficient and distracted alliance, and in the full flush of their strength and glory, stood the leader and the army which for a hundred years have dominated the thought and the imagination of the military world. Tactics, means of communication, means of supply and transport, systems of service and recruitment, methods of organisation and command—all these things have been profoundly modified by the advance of science and modern commercial and political development ; but the man who first systematised the movement of gigantic hosts over vast distances, who realised the full significance of strategic combinations unfettered by physical obstacles and magazine supply, who, breaking loose from the Frederician tradition, exemplified in his battles all forms of tactical method and manœuvre, who, in one word, was the founder of our present system, its inspired teacher, its unequalled practitioner, that man was Napoleon ; and the army which in the last hundred years has most outdistanced its contemporaries was the Grand Army. In saying this it is not intended to detract from the greatness of Moltke and Roon, or to belittle the feats of their pupils, the Japanese. But neither the German who learnt so much from Napoleon, nor the Japanese who adopted the German system, can lay claim either to the French Emperor's

originality of conception or to his variety and vigour in performance. They completed, they regularised, they adapted; but, as Moltke was the first to admit, they remained the disciples of a far greater master. Nor were they inferior only in the sense that they were less than Napoleon himself. In many respects, not merely as compared with its contemporaries, but also with its successors, the Grand Army was relatively and actually a more efficient instrument of war than those of 1870 and 1904. In the first place, as the offspring of the Revolution, it possessed a freedom, a boldness of thought and action not easily transmitted, even through the most perfect of general staffs, to the soldiers of an hereditary monarchy. The men of the Grand Army possessed what has been called 'the theory of the impossible.' They knew of no such thing as the standard performance. They knew nothing, for instance, of the clinometer or of the angle of slope judged practicable for field artillery; but they crossed the Alps. Ill-supplied with pontoons, they managed in a few days by sheer energy, resolution, and intelligence to pass rivers which to other armies were only passable after weeks of preparation, to live in countries where others starved, to cover distances undreamt of by their opponents. They captured positions pronounced unassailable, they fought on ground which the disciples of Frederick eliminated from the field of tactics. No theory limited their spirit of enterprise, their physical activity admitted no bounds except those of uttermost human endurance. This extraordinary level of performance, essentially based upon the relentless exercise of untrammelled powers of mind and body, had a threefold value. It outbid the enemy, it deceived and surprised him, and it responded admirably to the demands made upon it by the uncontrollable energy of the most merciless of all generals. The result of this combination was that stupendous series of feats, both in battle and on the march, which, apart from the value of the specific manœuvre, placed the French army at the head of the military world, a position which it only lost when its personnel began to deteriorate or when a combination of circumstances, such as prevailed in Spain and Russia, deprived it of its mobility and energy.

More active in mind and body than its opponents, the Grand Army was also organised in a manner calculated to develop those qualities to the very utmost. The army corps system, by which bodies of from twenty to forty thousand men were placed under the command of a marshal, was infinitely more flexible and manage-

able than anything invented before. Each corps, as in modern Europe, consisted of contingents of all arms, and was therefore tactically as well as administratively complete. It was large enough to withstand for a considerable time the attacks of a superior force, and it lived and manœuvred under a single commander, an arrangement which was not merely the best means of ensuring combination in action, but enormously simplified the work of the headquarters staff. Except in very special circumstances the management of each corps was left to the corps commander, who was thus able to regulate the movement and grouping of his different divisions, the only possible system when large armies are moving across a wide area of country. There is no doubt that in the art of moving great masses of men over long distances, with a minimum of fatigue and in the shortest possible time, the French marshals have never been surpassed, if indeed equalled. Nor is this to be wondered at when it is remembered that year after year these corps lived together on what was practically a war footing, and had ample opportunity of learning all that could be learnt about movement and supply, whether in cantonments or on campaign.

Finally, to a system of far higher energy, intelligence, and flexibility the French added an experience of war unrivalled in the modern world, and leaders, young, vigorous, and capable enough to profit by what they had learnt. In 1807 Napoleon himself was in the prime of his powers, his subordinates were none of them much above forty, and all had grown in power and confidence during the two preceding years of stupendous victory. It has been the custom of late years to belittle the famous warriors who fought so long under the imperial eagles, but it may reasonably be doubted whether any leader—not excluding Moltke or Oyama—ever had at his disposal the wealth of talent possessed by Napoleon in 1806. The marshals were the picked men of the most warlike nation in the most warlike period of modern times. All were noted for exceptional personal bravery, a quality not so common as is sometimes supposed; all possessed in the command of large bodies of troops both on and off the field of battle an experience infinitely greater and more varied than that which falls to the lot of the corps leader at the present time. Mere executive officers some of them may have been, but they were executive officers of a type that any general nowadays would be glad to possess. But the best of them were more than this. Davout, Soult, Lannes, for example, were soldiers of very exceptional

ability, fitted for independent command, capable of large views and resolute action. Murat, whatever his faults, was the greatest cavalry leader of his age. Ney was a man who might decide the fate of a battle or save an army from destruction by his tactical skill, and by the influence of his heroic personality. Augereau was still the man of Castiglione. And after these men, whose slightest qualities are eagerly sought and not always found in modern armies, came a number of divisional generals, brigadiers, and colonels, every one of whom had proved himself a brave and capable officer, and some of whom were fitted to rank with the marshals themselves. Well might the master of that splendid machine have been proud of the men who composed it, and of the devotion which they lavished upon him, the sole source of honours, the absolute and unequalled ruler, the invincible captain, the adored and dreaded chief. We will not enter into the barren discussion of whether Napoleon was the greatest soldier that ever lived, or whether his army was the best that ever trod a field of battle; but it may safely be said that the two together formed an instrument of offensive war more terrible than any of which history makes mention. In numbers, in leadership, in organisation, in personnel, in morale, in almost everything, in a word, which we associate with the term 'military efficiency,' Napoleon possessed a vast superiority over the Russians. Nevertheless, the campaigns of Poland were arduous and costly, the battles desperate and frightfully bloody, and, with one exception, indecisive; and Tilsit was rather an amicable bargain between two equal protagonists than the dictation of terms by the conqueror to the conquered. It completed the work begun at Jena, but it left the military power of Russia unbroken. Admitting that the insuperable obstacle presented by distance to an invader was Russia's best defence after Friedland, we have still to inquire why in this war Napoleon's military superiority was less decisive than in the preceding ones, and why a triple encounter, although it ended in victory, was necessary to overcome an army smaller, less mobile, and infinitely worse commanded.

This fact is the more remarkable because the Russians from the first courted an encounter, and refused to have recourse to the policy of retreat which proved the undoing of Napoleon five years later. As the ally of Prussia they were necessarily pledged to a forward policy, but the considerations which induced Benningsen twice during the year 1807 to assume the offensive were primarily

of a military kind. On both occasions he missed his blow, and in so doing laid himself open to the terrible counterstroke of his great enemy; yet each time he succeeded in evading a disaster, and the resulting battles of Eylau and Heilsberg were not French victories. Even the decisive fight of Friedland was not forced on Benningsen by strategic manœuvre, but was the consequence of a renewed Russian offensive, and was only rendered fatal by the wonderful rapidity with which Napoleon took advantage of the false tactical situation of the Russian army. The three campaigns into which the war is divided do not present the picture of ordered consecutiveness, of apparent inevitability, of final annihilation, which characterises those of 1805 and 1806. The plans of each side fail in turn, and the decision is given by encounters in which, with the single exception of Friedland, manœuvre plays but a comparatively small part. The order of events is reversed. The soldier who is the very incarnation of the offensive is himself attacked, the man who has surprised everyone is himself surprised, the master of stratagem has to fight under conditions which deprive him of his most dangerous weapon. No doubt it is this lack of completeness, of brilliance, which has prevented the text-book writer from studying these campaigns with the same minuteness as those of 1805-6; and perhaps nothing can better illustrate the thinness and narrowness of a certain school of strategic teaching than the dull iteration with which its representatives keep explaining why the manœuvres of Jena and Vittoria succeeded, without apparently thinking it worth while to consider why those of Pultusk and Eylau and Heilsberg failed.

The sudden paling of the Emperor's star after he crossed the Vistula was due to three main causes—fortune, the character of the country, and the extraordinary capacity for defensive action shown by the Russian soldier. Like all poor countries, Poland was miserably roaded, and in the days of December, when the campaigns of Pultusk and Golymin were fought, the roads were simply bands of mud. To this is to be attributed the failure of Napoleon's wide-flung operations. In favourable weather and on good roads the manœuvres of the Grand Army would probably have met with the accustomed measure of success; under the conditions actually prevailing the different French corps were unable to co-operate, and a series of partial collisions took place in which neither side could claim a decisive advantage, and the French lost very heavily. The Russians retired, abandoning the valley of the Vistula from

Warsaw to the sea. So great had been the difficulties of movement and so fierce the fighting that Napoleon resolved to rest his exhausted troops during the winter. The different corps were spread out in cantonments east of the river, and preparations were made for the siege of Dantzic.

This pause in the operations did not last long. Contrary to the Emperor's express orders, Ney extended his cantonments so far in the direction of the Russian army that Benningsen, who had now assumed command of the allied forces, conceived the project of falling on the scattered troops of the marshal, reopening the communication with Dantzic, and making himself master of the Lower Vistula. The objection to this scheme lay in the fact that in carrying it out Benningsen would place himself between the coast and the powerful French masses lying near Thorn and Warsaw, and would thus run the risk of being cut from his communications with Russia and driven into the sea. He determined, however, to put it into execution, and, had his movements been as rapid and sustained as his plan was daring, it is extremely probable that he would have caught and destroyed Ney before Napoleon could support him. But, bold in conception, Benningsen lacked strength and energy of purpose. The fatal slowness that has so often wrecked a Russian offensive ruined the plan. Ney gained time to draw in his outlying troops and fall back to join Bernadotte; and Napoleon, after a brief period of uncertainty, penetrated his opponent's design. Two alternatives were open to him—the first, to march directly to join Ney and oppose a frontal resistance to the Russian advance; the second, to allow Ney to continue his retirement, and, in conjunction with Bernadotte, to lure the Russians towards the Vistula, while he himself with ninety thousand men concentrated to the southward of their line of march, and, falling on their left rear, flung them on the shores of the Baltic. This plan, although it involved a concentration within the enemy's reach, he adopted without a moment's hesitation. The roads were now hard with frost, and the Grand Army, its mobility restored, moved with wonderful quickness towards the required points. The net was on the point of closing round the unconscious Benningsen, who was deliberately pursuing Bernadotte and Ney, when the capture of a French officer carrying despatches revealed the whole of Napoleon's plan. Thus favoured by fortune, Benningsen managed to escape destruction, and, hotly pursued by the French, retired along the road to Preussisch-Eylau, where separate the routes

to Königsberg and to the Pregel, the last-named being the great communication with Russia. Here, yielding to the murmurs of his officers, who represented, not without reason, that if the winter retreat was continued the army would dissolve from starvation and exhaustion, the Russian general suddenly determined to deliver battle.

He drew up his army on a line of low hills east of Eylau, which village, after a bloody rearguard action extending far into the night, was abandoned to the French. The number of his troops, excluding 8,500 Prussians who joined him during the battle, was 74,000. They were arranged in three lines, in alternate line and column; and their front, which extended only 3,000 yards (= 28 men per yard), was garnished by immense batteries of cannon.

Benningsten's halt certainly took Napoleon by surprise. A battle was, as always, his object; but he seems hardly to have reckoned upon the enemy, whom he had pursued for a week, turning so suddenly to bay; and when on the morning of February 8 the battle began, more than a third of his available troops were still absent from the battlefield. Of Bernadotte's whereabouts nothing was known, and in any case he was far too distant to have any effect on the operations for several days; but neither Ney on the left flank, nor Davout on the right, both within a march of Eylau, had put in an appearance, and at the commencement Napoleon could oppose only 53,000 men to Benningsten's 74,000. The arrival of Davout's three divisions during the first half of the action gradually restored the numerical balance; but for some reason, probably because the Emperor was to the last sceptical as to his opponent's resolution to fight, the messenger summoning Ney was not despatched until eight o'clock in the morning, and did not reach the marshal until two o'clock in the afternoon.

Pending the arrival of his reinforcements Napoleon drew up his available troops on the gentle ridge which faced the Russian position. The little town of Eylau formed a support to his centre, and was occupied by one of Soult's divisions. Another of Soult's, with three brigades of light cavalry, formed the left wing; Augereau's two divisions, Soult's remaining division, and Milhaud's dragoons were on the right. In second line, behind Eylau itself, stood the Guard Infantry; and the reserve cavalry, 9,000 strong, formed in rear of Augereau. The French line measured about three miles in length (10 men per yard), and was therefore considerably longer and more loosely knit than that of Benningsten. The space separat-

ing the two armies averaged from 800 to 1,000 yards, an easy cannon shot. In his preliminary disposition it is worth noticing that Benningsen made the same mistake as Blücher at Ligny; that is to say, he left the dense masses of his infantry exposed to the fire of the French artillery. Napoleon, on the other hand, contrived to keep the whole of his cavalry reserves and a part of his infantry under cover, a precaution rendered the more necessary by the superior numbers of the Russian guns. Like his opponent, he placed a large portion of his smaller but better served artillery in front of his line of battle, nearly a hundred guns crowning the crest of the ridge behind which the bulk of his troops were standing. His general dispositions will remind military students of the arrangement of Wellington's line at Waterloo.

But, unlike Wellington, Napoleon had no intention of fighting a defensive battle. His order to Davout, despatched on the evening before the battle, and the distribution of his troops in the Eylau position leave no doubts as to his object. In case the Russians stood fast, the Marshal was to fall on their left flank, while Augereau, supported by the Reserve cavalry, attacked their left wing and left centre. Nearly 50,000 troops, therefore, were to be hurled against that wing of the enemy which covered the main road to Russia, while the divisions to the left of Eylau, to be supported later by the corps of Ney, held fast the Russian right and centre.

The plan of action, in its unity, strength, and secrecy, was conceived in Napoleon's best manner. The occurrences which interfered with its complete execution may be briefly detailed. As soon as the winter dawn gave sufficient light the battle was begun with a murderous cannonade, the powerful Russian batteries doing great damage to the French left in and beyond Eylau. In this quarter the battle throughout the day was mainly confined to the opposing artilleries. The main action on the other wing developed very rapidly. About 8 A.M. Davout's leading division entered the field, and, supported by that of Morand, began its attack upon the Russian left. So heavy, however, was the fire from the batteries of the defence that even the heroes of Auerstadt could gain no ground; and it was in order to lighten their task that Napoleon directed Augereau to attack the Russian centre, whose battery had not then been unmasked. The resulting catastrophe seems to have been due partly to a blinding snowstorm, which confused Augereau's deployment and caused him to lose direction, partly to a misunderstanding of the order; but to attack

with infantry only—Augereau's batteries were left behind or masked by his own advancing troops—a strong and intact position was in itself a rash proceeding, and the punishment was swift and terrible. Torn to pieces by cannon and musketry, and ridden down by cavalry, the corps lost half its numbers, and those who found their way back to the French position were utterly unfit for further employment. It was a worse disaster than that which befell D'Erlon at Waterloo. The French centre was almost denuded of infantry; and had Benningsen at once supported the partial counter strokes of his victorious troops with his reserves, Napoleon might have found some difficulty in maintaining the field. By itself the repulse alone would have been sufficient to reduce any but a great soldier to a timid defensive; but Napoleon's insight into the moral forces of battle was too clear and his will too resolute to permit the attack to slacken. Already in the first moment of the struggle his rapidity of judgment had given him a start over his opponent. The instant that he saw Augereau's divisions in difficulties, and before the gallantry of the troops themselves would permit them to acknowledge the hopelessness of their position, he had ordered the whole of the reserve cavalry and the cavalry of the Guard to attack; and ere the Russians could fully realise the extent of their successes over the French infantry, their lines were submerged by successive waves of horsemen. The details of this mighty onset have escaped the historian, but it is sufficiently clear that in its general effect it considerably surpassed the great charges at Waterloo. The Russian gunners were sabred, the infantry ridden over, their rearmost lines broken, and Benningsen's last reserves had to be employed to restore the fabric of his front of battle.

Heavy as was the price paid by these fine squadrons, the results were worth the cost. Augereau's remnants were enabled to regain their original positions; all ideas of a grand counterstroke against the thinned front of the French army were dissipated; and, best of all, the Russian left and left-centre was thoroughly shaken and disorganised. The extraordinarily rapid success of Davout in the hours after midday can only be explained on the assumption that the Russian army had been temporarily demoralised by the furious onslaught of the cavalry.

Undeterred by Augereau's defeat and his own heavy losses, this most resolute of the marshals had continued to press his attack; and early in the afternoon his progress threatened Benningsen with disaster. By about three o'clock the whole left half of the Russian

line was rolled up, and had almost ceased to exist as a military body. The reserves were exhausted, streams of fugitives were leaving the field, and Davout's infantry had reached the Tilsit road, thus intercepting Benningsen's best line of retreat. There seems some ground for the view advanced by Lettow-Vorbeck that had Napoleon himself accompanied Davout's advance and thrown the whole of his still intact troops into the fight, no efforts of Lestocq's Prussians could have saved the Russian general from a decisive defeat. But Napoleon himself remained at Eylau, whence the increasing dispersion and extension of Davout's infantry were invisible, and his still disposable reserves were not employed. The consequences were that Davout's men, wearied with eight hours' desperate fighting, and scattered over too wide a space, lost the momentum necessary to drive the beaten enemy from the field; and that when Lestocq joined the right of his ally, he was able without special difficulty to pass along the rear of the Russian line, push Davout back, and regain a large part of the ground lost. This Allied success, which terminated the struggle on the Russian left, was not counterbalanced by the tardy advance and partial action of Ney's advanced guard against the Russian right. The failure of this marshal to keep in touch with Lestocq during the early part of the day, and the late arrival of the order to join Napoleon, almost neutralised the success of Davout, and left the French army at nightfall in a terribly critical position. All accounts agree that its losses and exhaustion would have rendered it incapable of renewing the struggle on the following day; and Napoleon, as is shown by a letter to Duroc on the night of the battle, seriously considered the possibility of a retreat beyond the Vistula. Not until Benningsen's abandonment of the field relieved his anxiety did he venture to claim a victory.

Benningsen's determination to retire, though it cannot reasonably be blamed, is a decisive proof of his mediocrity, of his incapacity to subordinate the material to the moral. His losses, actually amounting to about a third of his army, may well have seemed immense, the exhaustion and disorganisation of the survivors were equally apparent, and the appearance of Ney's corps in the final stage of the action suggested the possibility that his opponent would attack his right with fresh troops on the following morning. On the other hand, the impression seems to have been general in the Russian army, both amongst soldiers and generals, that they had won a victory. There were even those who urged Benningsen to assume the offensive, and, so far as loss and exhaustion were

concerned, the French were clearly at least as badly off as himself. Had he possessed the nerve of Suvaroff or Napoleon he would have held his ground and trusted to the moral forces generated in the battle and to the indomitable tenacity of his men to enable him to maintain it. But Benningsen had neither the mind nor the will that together constitute a hero; he broke up in the night and retired to Königsberg. As to what would have happened if he had taken the opposite course it is useless to speculate; but it is certain that with the disappearance of the Russian columns vanished also the last chance of a successful termination of the contest with Napoleon. Like Melas at Marengo and the Archduke Charles after Aspern, Benningsen was vanquished not by the manœuvres nor the fighting power, but by the stronger will of his enemy, by that moral superiority which is not expressible in terms of material power, but which is the last and almost unfailing resource of the really great, and it is not relatively but absolutely decisive. Lee at Sharpsburg awing an army of twice his own numbers into timid inaction, and thus depriving the opposing general of his superior material force; Wellington at Waterloo maintaining a desperate struggle in order to give that material force (as represented by the Prussian army) time to develop its full effect, are two other illustrations of that same transcendent courage of which, as Clausewitz finely says, the proper and natural element is the uncertain.

When Benningsen next met his mighty opponent the equipoise was no longer to be maintained by an army of 80,000 men. In the brief summer campaign which ended the war the French Emperor entered the field with over 200,000 men; and the bloody check which a fourth of his army received at Heilsberg could not restore the balance. Even at Friedland, in the absence of a third of his French army, Napoleon's numerical superiority was almost as great as that which he possessed at Jena, that is to say, about 9 to 5. Russian bravery was as conspicuous as ever, but in this case neither fortune nor climatic conditions were present to neutralise the inequality in material force, provided always that its possessors had the will and power to employ it. Once again, as on all his battlefields, Napoleon's victory was primarily due to the boldness of his decision and the energy of his action. It must have been clear to many in the French army that if the Russian army could be deprived of its means of repassing the Alle and driven into the river, the defeat would be decisive and annihilating; the question was, could it be done? How many commanders-in-chief,

with the experiences of Heilsberg and Eylau before them, would have ventured to attack late in the afternoon of June 14, at a moment when 60,000 of the best troops under Soult, Davout, and Murat were absent, and the details of Benningsen's position and the numbers of the Russian troops on the left bank were unknown? The fact that the battle was actually decided in about three hours in no way detracts from the boldness of the leader who deliberately preferred to run the risk of a long and sanguinary struggle rather than give Benningsen an opportunity of withdrawing from a false tactical position.

One or two observations in conclusion. The battles of Eylau and Friedland furnish an extremely instructive illustration of the relative values of the defensive or offensive. If we leave out of account the army created by Wellington, we may safely say that no armies were better fitted to exemplify the two great forms of war than the Russian and the French; the one stubborn, immobile, immovable, and possessed of a very powerful artillery; the other fiery, swift, flexible, and commanded by a leader of unequalled tactical skill and quickness.

The result of these great collisions brings out on the one hand the truth of Clausewitz's proposition that the defensive *under good conditions* is essentially the stronger form of war, as entailing less fatigue, less loss, less risk of grand irrecoverable error than the offensive, and as requiring a lower standard of military efficiency for its successful practice. Thus at Eylau the uttermost exertions of the French were needed to shake Benningsen's line of battle, and by the time the Russian army was ripe for defeat the assailants were incapable of making the necessary effort, were in fact more exhausted than the weary defenders. Exactly the same phenomenon appeared at Zorndorf, Kunersdorf, Borodino, and Liaoyang. On the other hand, however, the conditions which favour the defensive appear less easy to obtain. The *average circumstances* of a modern campaign, chief amongst which is ignorance of the enemy's position, do not favour a form of war which largely consists in accepting rather than in dictating the course of events. Hence the value of strategic and tactical initiative, which for the very reason that it does dictate events becomes up to a certain point a substitute for information. This was the great truth which Napoleon grasped, and which, thanks to his own energy, imagination, and power of combination, he exploited with such extraordinary results. But even these qualities do not by themselves account for the success of his offensive system. To this the army which he led powerfully contributed.

Even in the fiercely contested campaigns of 1807 the superior offensive power of the French army is easily apparent. It was essentially a manœuvring army, and whenever the circumstances permitted of manœuvre, whether in the field of battle or off it, the effect was immediate and generally decisive. Witness the march against Benningsen's communications before Eylau and the rapid concentration on Friedland. We have already referred to the dispositions of the two armies at Eylau; those at Friedland present the same characteristic differences. As before, the Russian army is drawn up in closed lines one behind the other, the cavalry massed on the wings; the bulk of the troops within view of the enemy. As before, Napoleon's army presents a more loosely articulated front, in accordance with the topography and the plan of action. While the Russian army at once takes up its fighting position and there awaits the attack, the Grand Army simply adopts a disposition of manœuvre. The skirmishing powers of Lannes's infantry are used to occupy the enemy's attention and to cover the debouchement of the army from the wooded defile and its deployment in the preparatory position. To the last moment as few troops as possible are shown, and the reserves are massed behind the wing which is destined to strike the decisive blow. All this is thoroughly Napoleonic and modern; we see here employed the two great principles of modern fighting, namely the *containing power* of a small force, and the *deep preparatory formation* to which Moltke attached so much importance. Nothing like it was seen until the Peninsular campaigns of Wellington.

Lastly, a word as to the part actually played by the tactical manœuvre in the two battles. Benningsen's conduct of the actions is sufficiently indicated by his preliminary dispositions. Interpreting the defensive as a wholly passive form of conflict, he does not attempt to manœuvre on a scale that can really alter the character of the struggle; as Napoleon, for instance, did at Austerlitz and Leipzig, Wellington at Salamanca and Sorauren, and Lee at the Second Manasses. His one notion seems to have been to offer to the French onslaught an immovable frontal resistance. A recognition of the well-known principle that the defensive is only a means of exhausting the enemy, of forcing him to show his hand, and to entangle himself in an unfavourable line of attack, is merely a preparatory phase intended to pave the way to the decisive counter-stroke, is nowhere to be detected. At Friedland, no doubt, the overwhelming rapidity of the French attack did not permit

of any attempt at a counter-offensive ; but at Eylau, and possibly at Heilsberg, there were moments when such a policy might have been adopted with success. The low manœuvring power of the Russian army, which must assuredly have hampered Benningsen's initiative, just as the consciousness of the same weakness handicapped the bold spirit of Wellington during the first part of the Peninsular war, is no doubt partly accountable for the passiveness of the Russian commander ; but to assume that it rendered a tactical offensive in all circumstances impracticable was tantamount to admitting that victory was from the outset an impossibility. As historians, we may admit the general truth of such a proposition : as the leader of the Russian army Benningsen had no right to entertain it ; nor until after Eylau does he seem to have done so. Benningsen's passiveness and consequent failure in that battle must be attributed less to his failure to recognise the true principle of a successful defensive, than to his inability to realise it in practice.

Napoleon's policy, as we have seen, was diametrically opposed to that of Benningsen, his tactics on every occasion taking the form of energetic offensive manœuvres. In both the great battles his attack was aimed against the flank and wing where success would have the most decisive strategic results : at Eylau it failed, at Friedland it succeeded. Few, we imagine, would instance Eylau as a brilliant example of Napoleonic tactics ; yet in conception the plan of action, determined in more difficult circumstances, was at least the equal of that of Friedland, and, as we have said, left nothing to be desired in point of secrecy, strength, and simplicity. It failed in execution, not through any counter-measures of Benningsen, but through lack of combination on the part of the French ; and from the moment of Augereau's defeat the strength necessary to complete the success of the manœuvre is lacking. The fact that after such a catastrophe means were found sufficient to restore the battle is an extraordinary proof of the capacity and energy of the Grand Army and its chief ; and it is the display of these qualities which makes Eylau worthy to be placed beside battles better combined and more decisive, and renders it so valuable a study for the practical soldier. It is at such moments of crisis, when plans collapse and defeat seems imminent, that the grand elemental factors of war emerge, and that it is seen whether a general and an army really possess those rare characteristics which tactical forms so often conceal, and without which all the manœuvres in the world are dangerous delusions.

F. H. E. CUNLIFFE.

A TWENTIETH-CENTURY MISOGYNIST.¹

I.

WHAT a place to be in is an old library! It seems as though all the souls of all the writers that have bequeathed their labours to these Bodleians were reposing here, as in some dormitory, or middle state. I do not want to handle, to profane the leaves, their winding sheets. I could as soon dislodge a shade. I seem to inhale learning walking amid their foliage; and the odour of their old moth-scented coverings is fragrant as the first bloom of those scintial apples which grew amid the happy orchard.—CHARLES LAMB.

EVERY Easter holidays the schoolmaster went back to Oxford. Head of a flourishing preparatory school in the north, a bachelor, absorbed in his boys, strenuous, matter-of-fact, he yet retained after some twenty years of monotonous grind a romantic affection for the dear city of his youthful dreams.

He always put up at the 'King's Arms,' that ancient hostel with the undulating floors, where the ale is brown and strong, and the cold beef tender and streaky. On his very first day he hid him to a solitude he loved, paid his modest threepence, and mounted to a favourite haunt of his—the picture-gallery of the Bodleian Library.

It was always empty; it almost always is empty. Undergraduates know it not; artistic and intellectual residents appear to scorn its prosaic portraits of bygone poets and college benefactors, its humble curiosities. Visitors seldom trouble themselves to mount the few extra steps leading to it from the world-famed library below. But the schoolmaster loved to wander up and down the second gallery. He loved the double archway with the traceried roof, where the statue of William, Earl of Pembroke, stands in the centre, and the two wide bay windows are filled with pale stained glass, and one has a deep, comfortable seat.

As usual, the gallery seemed deserted, and the schoolmaster let the peace of its solitude slide into his soul, till his spirit was compassed about with a great calm. He strolled slowly through the gallery, his hands, holding his straw hat, clasped behind him. He

¹ Copyright, 1907, by L. Allen Harker, in the United States of America.

always uncovered the instant he entered the little modest door in the corner of the great quadrangle that leads to so many wonders. Presently he reached the archway where he was wont to sit and dream.

With a start of surprise he discovered that it was already tenanted.

Under the portraits of Ben Jonson and Joseph Trapp, curled up in a corner of the deep window seat, his muddy boots reposing on the sacred oak, was a boy—a small, thin boy in Norfolk jacket and knickerbockers, apparently about twelve years old, who read absorbedly a popular illustrated magazine. He never looked up as the schoolmaster approached. Apparently he neither heard his footstep nor realised that the newcomer had paused to stare at him in speechless astonishment.

Amazement, accompanied by extreme annoyance, was the schoolmaster's predominant emotion. There seemed in him something incongruous to the verge of irreverence in anyone daring to read a modern magazine under the very roof of the building that contained so much of venerable scholarship.

It is true that the boy was perfectly quiet. Beyond the turning of his page he made no sound of any sort, and the schoolmaster found himself watching this reader with a sort of dreadful fascination. He longed that the child should reach the bottom of his page and look up. He even gave a little cough to attract his attention. But the boy seemed absolutely unconscious of either the stranger's presence or his scrutiny, and read on unmoved, smiling occasionally at what he read.

The schoolmaster fussed to the end of the gallery, pausing at every window to look out over the roofs at the towers and spires of Oxford. Then he fussed back again along the other side, where the view consists of the grey-walled quadrangle, a veritable 'haunt of ancient peace.' The peace that had enveloped him on his first entry spread her wings and fled. Irritation and curiosity had taken her place, and as he reached the archway again he stopped and looked at the motionless little figure in the window.

The boy was no longer reading.

The magazine lay on the window seat beside him. His knees were drawn up to his chin, his arms clasped about them, and he stared unblinkingly at the portrait of Abraham Cowley on the wall that faced him.

The schoolmaster walked round the statue of William of Pem-

broke till he, too, faced the boy. This time the child certainly glanced in his direction, but the glance was of the most cursory order, and wholly without interest. In an instant he had returned to his grave contemplation of the poet, and the schoolmaster might himself have been the statue of William of Pembroke for any interest he excited.

The boy was pale and thin-faced, with large, hollow eyes and a tall, wide forehead—a scholar's forehead, as the schoolmaster, accustomed for years to the observation of boys, had already noted. But what latent scholarship was displayed in the reading of that obnoxious magazine? And what business, the schoolmaster asked himself angrily, had a boy of that age to be boxed up indoors on a fine afternoon in the Easter holidays?

The schoolmaster was a conscientious man in the pursuit of his calling. From the very first he had taught himself to look upon boys as individuals. He loved them; he whole-heartedly wished them well. They were to him of most absorbing interest; but he liked to get away from them sometimes, and nowhere had he been able to pass so completely from his ordinary life of a hundred petty duties and anxieties as in the high solitude of that deserted gallery, set in the very centre of the scenes he held most dear, now spoilt and desecrated by this young interloper with his horrid modern magazine. Why on earth did he choose to come here?

The schoolmaster could bear it no longer. 'Boy,' he exclaimed, 'why do you come and read here?'

Slowly the boy turned his melancholy eyes upon his questioner. 'Because,' he answered, civilly enough, but without any enthusiasm, 'it is generally perfectly quiet here.'

There was the faintest perceptible emphasis on the 'generally,' not so much impertinent as gently reproving. Having answered, he turned his eyes again upon the chubby smiling countenance of Abraham Cowley, and silence fell upon them like a pall.

The schoolmaster was baffled, but more curious than ever. He was quite conscious of the implied reproach in the 'generally,' and he noted the absence of the courteous 'sir' with which any properly constituted boy would conclude a remark made to an elder. But he could not feel that the boy had been wilfully rude. He would try again. 'May I ask,' he said pleasantly, 'why you are so fond of looking at the portrait of Abraham Cowley?'

Again the boy shifted his gaze from the smug charms of the poet to the worn and somewhat homely features of his questioner.

'I like him 'cos he's so good-tempered—in this one,' was the brief reply.

The schoolmaster came and stood beside the boy, and looked at the portrait. Above it was another, also by Kneller, but representing him as thin and severe-looking.

'They're very different, aren't they?' the schoolmaster remarked. 'You'd hardly think they were the same man, would you?'

'I expect,' the boy said solemnly, 'in the top one he's been married.'

This startling supposition fairly took away the schoolmaster's breath. He racked his brains to remember all he had ever heard or read of Abraham Cowley, and couldn't for the life of him recollect whether he was married or not. It is not in the nature of a true schoolmaster to leave a youthful mind in the darkness of ignorance if he can be the bearer of a torch whose light may pierce that gloom, so he said: 'I expect it was his political troubles that caused so marked a change in his appearance. Do you know anything about him?'

'No, but I like him.'

'Shall I tell you about him?'

'No, thank you,' the boy answered politely, but with firm finality.

He took up his magazine again, opened it, spread it upon his knees, and in one instant was absorbed in its pages.

The schoolmaster sat down on the window-seat, and gazed alternately at the boy and at the portraits of Ben Jonson and Joseph Trapp above his head. Since he had been a little boy himself he had never felt so snubbed. He was wholly unaccustomed to be a cypher in the eyes of boys, and suddenly with devastating force there was flung upon him the conviction that he never saw a real boy at all—that the boys he saw were all carefully expurgated editions arranged to suit his sensibilities.

A wild spirit of enterprise seduced the schoolmaster. He felt himself as one who after long sailing in smooth familiar waters suddenly sights an unknown and precipitous shore.

He had come to Oxford to get away from the boys he thought he knew. What if, at Oxford, he received real enlightenment with regard to a boy he did not know? The sunshine faded and the gallery grew dark. Outside, he heard the soft patter of a heavy April shower.

'You ought not to read in this light,' he said suddenly, 'you will hurt your eyes.'

The boy looked up surprised at this fresh interruption, but he obediently closed his book: there is something almost irresistible in the commands of those accustomed to exert authority.

'Do you come here often?' asked the schoolmaster.

'Yes, whenever I've got threepence to get in.'

'Has no one ever told you that when you are talking to an older man it is considered polite to say "sir"?''

'No. I don't know many old men, nor men at all, for the matter of that.'

'Why, Oxford is full of men.'

'That may be. I don't know 'em. I only wish I did.'

The boy spoke bitterly and his eyes were full of gloom.

'Don't you go to school?' this 'older man' asked anxiously.

'No, I'm too delicate, so they say.'

'Who teaches you, then?'

'A guv'nness. I say, do you think we *ought* to talk here?'

'I see no reason why not. This isn't the library, there is no notice enforcing silence.'

The boy looked as if he wished there was. He sat perfectly mute with his eyes fixed on the placid portrait over the schoolmaster's head.

'Wouldn't you like to come downstairs with me and see some of the curiosities in the library?' the schoolmaster suggested beguilingly.

'No, thank you.'

Really it was most difficult to make any headway with this boy. But the schoolmaster possessed to the full the necessary perseverance of his craft, so he continued his catechism: 'Do your parents live in Oxford?'

'I haven't got any parents, they're dead.'

'Dear me, how sad! With whom do you live, then?'

'Aunts.'

Written words can in no wise express the snappiness with which the boy ejaculated this monosyllable. The schoolmaster felt unaccountably chilled and worsted, and silence fell upon them once more.

The black cloud had passed over the Bodleian, the rain ceased, and the sun shone out again. The boy swung his feet off the window seat, put on his cap and picked up his magazine, and without a

word of farewell, strolled nonchalantly out of the gallery, leaving the schoolmaster to exclaim when he had finally vanished, 'Well, of all the curmudgeony boys it has ever been my lot to meet, there goes the most curmudgeony!'

II.

Yet he found it difficult to dismiss the ungracious youngster from his thoughts. Next afternoon he sought the gallery again, but there was no little figure curled up in the deep window-seat. The poet Cowley smiled serenely, the gallery was deserted, dignified, reposeful as of yore: with all its mellow charm of faded colouring, that even the luminous stillness of that April afternoon could not burnish into real brightness. But the usual sense of pleasant well-being, and ordered peace, failed to enwrap the soul of the schoolmaster. Even as the day before he had found the presence of the reading figure in the window irritating and incongruous, so to-day he found its absence singularly disturbing. He walked once round the gallery, sate a few minutes looking at the portrait of Cowley and wondering what mysterious charm it held for the queer child who loved it, and so into the dear familiar irregular streets, where he scanned every boy who passed, in the hope of coming across his small acquaintance of the day before. He went every day to the gallery, but no boy was there. He almost gave up hope of ever seeing him again, but he did not forget; and when, eight days after their first meeting, he mounted to the gallery and saw the little figure crouched in the window as before, with a gaily covered magazine open on his knees, the schoolmaster's kind heart beat a little faster, and he hurried forward exclaiming 'Where have you been all these days?'

The boy started at his greeting, looked up, and a smile of recognition changed his face so absolutely that the schoolmaster felt a queer tightening in the muscles of his throat.

'I don't get my pocket-money till a Friday,' the boy explained. 'I couldn't come before.'

'Well, now you are here, let's have a chat together,' the schoolmaster said genially. 'We both like this place, let's tell each other the reasons why, and see if they're the same.'

He sat down beside the boy, just out of reach of the muddy boots. The boy, his magazine still held open on his knees, surveyed his neighbour with dark, mournful eyes. Now that the smile had

ceased to lighten his face, the schoolmaster was shocked at the sharpness of the thin cheekbones, the hollows and blue shadows under the solemn eyes.

'I can't tell you why I like it,' said the boy, 'cept p'r'aps because it's so quiet, no one ever talks here, and there's no women.'

'But women can come here if they like,' the schoolmaster objected.

'They never *do* like, not when I'm here,' the boy exclaimed eagerly. 'I've been here every week for months and months and I've never seen one.'

'But why do you object to women?' the schoolmaster persisted. 'We should be in a poor case without them, most of us.'

'I don't object to them,' the boy said wearily, 'it's them objects to us, and they do talk so—talk and talk and talk about their sufferings.'

'Sufferings?' the schoolmaster repeated.

'You know,' said the boy impatiently, 'women's sufferings and votes and things, and Parliament and injustice and that.'

'Suffrage, suffrage, you mean suffrage!' cried the schoolmaster.

'It's all the same, that's what they talk about, and inferiority and that. One can't help being born a boy, can one?'

'*Help* it!' exclaimed the schoolmaster. 'Why, who'd be born anything else if they had their choice?'

The boy's pale cheeks flushed. 'Do you really mean that?' he asked eagerly.

'Of course I do. It's a glorious thing to be a boy who is going to be a man.'

'*They* don't think so, they say it's much better to be a girl, they're sorry I'm a boy.'

'Oh, come,' the schoolmaster said chaffingly. 'You can't expect me to believe that. They may say so in a kind of joke, but they don't really mean it.'

'Do you know my aunts?'

'Well, no; but I expect they are very like other ladies, who often say what they don't mean.'

The boy gave one scornful glance in the direction of the schoolmaster, lowered his eyes to the printed page, and was instantly absorbed.

The schoolmaster felt that he was dismissed. He had been weighed in the balance, and found wanting in sympathy and insight, a mere stupid looker-on at the outside of things. Five

minutes ago the boy had welcomed him. Now, it was as though the child had risen with royal prerogative, and closed the interview. The schoolmaster sighed deeply.

The boy looked up. His eyes were the colour of a still pool in a Devonshire trout-stream, brown, with olive-green shadows, suggesting depths unfathomable. The schoolmaster instantly seized upon the small concession, exclaiming 'I came here every day in the hope of seeing you again, and now that you are here, you sit and read. Don't you think it's rather unkind?'

The boy flushed hotly, and once more the transforming smile illumined his face as he said, 'You came here on purpose to see me? Why?'

'Well, you see, I've known a good many boys in my time, and I thought you seemed a bit lonely . . .'

The hungry eyes devoured him, and the schoolmaster stopped in the middle of his sentence, for, like all Englishmen, he dreaded any manifestation of feeling, and the boy looked as if he were about to cry. His fears were groundless, however, for the child only said 'How many boys have you known?'

'Rather over a thousand, I fancy. You see, it has been my business to have to do with boys for over twenty years.'

'Over a thousand boys—and I don't know one! How unfair things are, and beastly.'

The boy looked enviously at the grizzled man who had known so many boys; and the man looked pityingly at this boy who seemed to have been somehow cheated of all that makes youth joyous.

'How is it you have no friends of your own age?' he said presently. 'Why don't you beg your aunts to send you to school? You'd probably get stronger directly you got there, with the regular games, and busy life.'

'My aunts don't like schools. They say boys learn to be tyrants and bullies at school.'

'Oh, do they? You couldn't have fifty tyrants in one place, or they'd be the death of one another, like the Kilkenny cats.'

'My aunts say,' the boy continued, 'that I'm to be a result. I won't be a result. It's beastly to be a result. I'll be a policeman when I'm grown up. Just you wait. I'll stand outside Parliament, and if a woman comes near I'll carry her to gaol. You see if I don't.'

The boy spoke with such vindictive bitterness that the schoolmaster was shocked.

'I have no doubt,' he said soothingly, 'that your aunts have good reasons for many of their views. You cannot possibly judge of such questions for many years to come.'

'You'd judge if you heard it all day long like I do,' the boy retorted. 'It's only here I get away from it. Here in this nice quiet with that fat contented chap smiling at me; and now you've been and made me talk about it, so even *he* will know. You've gone and spoilt my place—it's too bad.'

The boy looked as if he was really going to cry this time, and the schoolmaster felt dreadfully guilty.

'Tell me about your parents,' he said hastily. 'Do you remember them?'

'My father died before I was born, and my mother just after—she always was very unwise.'

'My dear boy, you ought not to speak about your mother like that. You shock me.'

'Well, *they* say so.'

'If anyone was to say to me that my mother was unwise I'd—I'd knock him down,' the schoolmaster exclaimed.

'P'r'aps you knew her?'

'Thank God! yes.'

'Ah, I didn't, you see—and I don't think I could knock Aunt Amabel down—she's very strong.'

'Of course not, of course not,' the schoolmaster said hastily, 'I never suggested such a thing for a moment. I expect you misunderstand your aunts, and it is possible that they don't quite understand you.'

The boy said nothing. He no longer stared at Cowley's portrait. He stared at the schoolmaster, and in his melancholy gaze was concentrated all the bitterness and disappointment of his twelve short years.

'Let us come out and walk by the Cher,' said the schoolmaster.

The boy followed him obediently, and as they turned into Catharine Street, slipped his hand into that of his new acquaintance.

'Twelve years old,' thought that worthy, 'and he takes a fellow's hand. Poor little chap!' Aloud he said 'Boys generally take each other by the arm, you know.'

Instantly his companion seized him by his, and arm in arm they sought the sheltered walk loved well by Joseph Addison.

III.

After that they met every day in the quadrangle of the Bodleian by appointment, and together mounted to their favourite seat in the picture-gallery. The boy no longer read a magazine ; instead, he asked questions—endless, anxious, exhaustive questions—as to the usual doings and habits of boys who lived with each other and were brought up by men. All his ideas on the subject were gathered from school stories, and in consequence were crude and chimerical in the extreme. It was undoubtedly a shock to him when this kindly friend of his frankly admitted that he had frequently caned boys, and that he was supposed to have ‘rather a heavy hand.’ And the schoolmaster was still more shocked at the bitterness of soul he discovered in this queer, quiet boy. He gathered that the aunts—generally spoken of as ‘they’—were ladies wholly absorbed in politics and every kind of movement for the emancipation of women, and the schoolmaster pictured them as members of the shrieking sisterhood, ill-favoured and ill-dressed, oblivious of the fact that feminine political opinions do not necessarily march in elastic-sided boots. When the boy did condescend to mention one of his aunts by name it was always of ‘Aunt Amabel’ he spoke. She appeared to be the guiding spirit of the trio, busy, strong, and energetic, spending what time she could spare from politics in the pursuit of all those games from which the unfortunate boy was debarred by lack of comrades, and the schoolmaster found himself thinking with quite unusual enthusiasm of the sister who kept house for him. At times he had regretted her exclusively domestic talents. Now he even began to share her serene conviction that women were, on the whole, so much superior to men that only the very foolish could wish to resemble them.

In the course of their long talks the schoolmaster had enlightened his companion as to what constituted, in his simple creed, the whole duty of boy ; and so far as his ideals related to honour and courage and truthfulness, he found the child singularly receptive and responsive ; but when he touched on the chivalry that should be shown to women, when he tried to arouse the protective instinct that is generally so deeply rooted and spontaneous in even the most rough and tumble average boy, he was met by blank incomprehension, or a veiled hostility that puzzled and depressed him. ‘If this,’ thought he to himself, ‘is the result of the feminist

movement on the rising generation of men, God help the next generation of women !'

The men had come up, and the schoolmaster's holiday was nearly ended. In two days more he would need to return to his duties in the North, to look after the cricket pitches in the playing fields, and to see that all was shipshape for the boys next term. For the last time he met his sad-faced little friend in Catharine Street. This time they did not go up to the picture-gallery. It was a sunny day in late April when Oxford seems to burgeon and blossom in a riotous ecstasy of youth and gladness. River and playing-fields were gay with lithe, flannelled figures, and everywhere the air was sweet with the scent of opening lilacs.

'We'll go on the river this afternoon,' cried the schoolmaster when he spied the little figure waiting for him, 'it's far too fine to be boxed up indoors. I'll take you in a Canadian canoe. You must sit very still, you know. You don't think your aunts would mind, do you ?'

'They're in London. Aunt Amabel comes back to-night, but she'll be off again in a day or two ; she's always going to meetings. I'm jolly glad she's been away this week ; she might have wanted to interfere——'

'I don't think she would mind your coming out with me, or I wouldn't take you. You must tell her all about it this evening. I'll give you my card to show her, and you can explain how we met.'

The boy's dark eyes were mutinous as he took the proffered card and put it in his pocket, but he said nothing. On the river in the bright sunshine the schoolmaster noticed how very ill he looked, and a great desire possessed this kindly soul to make things easier for the boy. The sight of the black shadows encircling the sombre eyes that should have been so bright with youth and hope decided the schoolmaster to do what he most hated doing—to interfere in another's affairs, where he had no possible excuse or even reason for so doing.

He walked back with the boy to his home, one of the large, ugly, comfortable houses 'standing in its own grounds,' that have sprung up on the outskirts of beautiful old Oxford : a house that looked excessively well-to-do and trim and neat. 'Nothing of Mrs. Jellyby here,' thought the schoolmaster.

'Sha'n't I see you again ?' asked the boy in a husky whisper, as they reached his gate. 'It'll be awful when you're gone.'

'We'll see, we'll see,' the schoolmaster said hastily. 'I can't

make an arrangement now. Good-bye, my boy, God bless you !'

The boy's wistful eyes were more than he could bear. The man turned hastily and walked away, nor once looked back at the watching figure by the gate.

Next morning he called upon Aunt Amabel about ten o'clock. The less conventional the hour, the more possible did he feel it might be to explain his errand. She was at home and would see him. The boy had evidently done his bidding. As he followed the maid from the drawing-room to the study, he prayed that some Pentecostal gift of tongues might be vouchsafed to him.

Aunt Amabel was seated at a large knee-hole table covered with papers. She rose as he came into the room and held out her hand. The businesslike table, the litter of papers, was exactly what the schoolmaster had expected, but the lady was wholly unlike the lady of his dreams. Tall, well-dressed, good-looking, and by no means old, she made things harder for him by her welcome. 'You are the gentleman who has been so good to Reginald ? It is kind of you to call. I am most pleased to meet you. He is a somewhat unusual boy, is he not ? We rather pride ourselves on his taste for old buildings, and things that do not generally appeal to boys.'

The schoolmaster mumbled some vague politeness and seated himself upon a chair which faced the knee-hole table. Aunt Amabel's eyes were dark, like the boy's, but they were bright and lively, and she turned them now upon her visitor with full inquiring gaze.

'I came,' the schoolmaster said bluntly, 'to see you about your nephew. He is not well, and I think his state of health arises largely from the fact that he has no companions of his own age, nor suitable interests. Why don't you send him to school ?'

As he spoke he was perfectly conscious that this self-possessed young woman was misjudging him, and the knowledge made him even less diplomatic than usual.

'We have never considered him strong enough for school life. He is an unusual child of difficult temperament. He would be extremely unhappy at school.'

There was a superior finality in the lady's tone that roused all the fighting element in the schoolmaster. 'He could hardly be more unhappy than he is at present,' he said sharply. 'I know that this must appear, as indeed it is, a piece of unwarrantable interference on my part, but, having become really interested in the boy, I could not reconcile it to my conscience to leave Oxford

without warning you that if you persist in keeping your nephew away from the natural companionship, amusements, and employments of his age, he will wither away as surely as a plant withers when light and air are withheld from it. That boy will die.'

He shook a thick forefinger at her, and the scorn died out of her eyes. The men who most countenance the woman's movement are seldom masterful. Aunt Amabel began to like this dictatorial man. It was a new, and not altogether disagreeable, experience to be rated.

'You have a school, haven't you?' she asked sweetly.

The schoolmaster's dun-coloured face crimsoned. 'My dear young lady,' he answered hotly, 'if you imagine that I came to see you because I was touting for another pupil, pray dismiss the idea from your mind.' This time it was Aunt Amabel who blushed. 'I came because, knowing a good deal of boys, I feel sure that your nephew is delicate because he is lonely and unoccupied; he is a very boyish boy, a boy who needs the companionship of his own kind. You have an excellent preparatory school quite near here. Try for a term—see what it does for Reginald.'

'To be quite candid,' said Aunt Amabel, 'we do not care for the training, mental or moral, that boys receive at the average preparatory school.'

'Try one that's not average,' he interrupted. 'There are plenty of them, all fads and flannel shirts and girls thrown in. He won't learn anything, but what does that matter? It's health and youth and gladness that you want for him, and a normal point of view; at present that child's a perfect misogynist.'

The lady started at the word, and at this critical moment her nephew came into the room. At first he did not see his friend of the Bodleian; when he did he stopped short, looking from his aunt to her visitor with puzzled, timid eyes.

'Reginald,' said Aunt Amabel, 'this gentleman says you are lonely and unhappy, and that you would really like to go to school. Is this so?'

'Yes.'

The timid look faded from the boy's eyes to be replaced by one that was almost stern, so earnest was it.

'Why have you never said anything to me about it? You have never complained.'

'What was the use?'

'But how could we know you were not happy if you never said anything?'

'He knew, without my never saying anything,' The boy pointed at the schoolmaster, who sat with downcast eyes.

'So it appears,' the lady said somewhat tartly, 'although you seem to me to have said a good deal. That will do, Reginald ; you may go.'

But Reginald did not go. He looked at the schoolmaster, and he looked at his aunt. He took a step forward exclaiming earnestly, 'If you will let me be like other boys, Aunt Amabel, I won't be a policeman when I'm grown up ; I'll give it up ; I'll truly be something else.' The boy spoke as one who promises to part with some long-cherished and imperishable ideal.

'Oh, child !' exclaimed poor, puzzled Aunt Amabel, 'I can't imagine what you are talking about. *Do* run away.'

'You see,' said the boy sadly to the schoolmaster, 'she never *can* understand,' and he hastened from the room.

The schoolmaster rose. 'Believe me,' he said gently, 'I do not want your nephew for a pupil, I'd far rather keep him as a friend—I don't mean to say that a master can't be a friend to his boys, but the relationship must necessarily be a little different, and it has been a pleasant experience to come across a boy under quite new circumstances. I wouldn't spoil it for the world.'

Aunt Amabel looked down, and the schoolmaster noticed that her eyelashes were long and very black. 'I am sure you mean kindly,' she said gently, 'and you may be sure I shall give every consideration to what you have said.'

When her strange visitor had gone she sat for a long time quite still in front of her table, staring with unseeing eyes at the many papers scattered upon it. She knitted her black eyebrows and thought and thought, but apparently to no purpose, for presently she said to herself, 'What *could* he mean by calling that little boy a misogynist, and what on earth could the child mean about not being a policeman ?'

The boy was waiting for the schoolmaster at the gate as he went out. 'Well, was it any use ?' he cried eagerly.

'My dear chap,' said that gentleman, 'you are a little noodle. That's what you are.'

And the boy, as he trotted by the schoolmaster's side, found something vaguely comforting in this cryptic speech.

L. ALLEN HARKER.

THROUGH THE VORTEX OF A CYCLONE.¹

(The Cyclone.—‘The most fearful enemy which the mariner’s perilous calling obliges him to encounter.’)

It was in the middle of November that the four-masted barque ‘Golconda’ came down from Crockett and anchored off Telegraph Hill, San Francisco. She was loaded with grain, and was homeward bound round Cape Horn. Five days later she was towed out through the Golden Gates, and cast loose off the Heads, and so set sail upon the voyage that was to come so near to being her last.

For a fortnight we had baffling winds ; but after that time got a good slant that carried us down to within a couple of degrees of the Line. Here it left us, and over a week passed before we had managed to tack and drift our way into the Southern Hemisphere. About five degrees South of the Line we met with a fair wind that helped us Southward another ten or twelve degrees, and there, early one morning, it dropped us, ending with a short, but violent, thunder storm, in which, so frequent were the lightning flashes, that I managed to secure a picture of one, whilst in the act of snap-shooting the sea and clouds upon our port side.

During the day, the wind, as I have remarked, left us entirely, and we lay becalmed under a blazing, hot sun. We hauled up the lower sails to prevent them from chafing as the vessel rolled lazily on the scarce perceptible swells, and busied ourselves, as is customary on such occasions, with much swabbing and cleaning of paint-work. As the day proceeded, so did the heat seem to increase ; the atmosphere lost its clear look, and a low haze seemed to lie about the ship at a great distance. At times, the air seemed to have about it a queer, unbreathable quality ; so that one caught oneself breathing with a sense of distress. And so, hour by hour, the day moved steadily onward, the sense of oppression growing ever more acute.

Then—it was, I should think, about four-thirty in the afternoon—I became conscious of the fact that a strange, unnatural, dull, brick-red glare was in the sky. Very subtle it was, and I could not say that it came from any particular place ; but rather it seemed

¹ Copyright, 1907, by William Hope Hodgson, in the United States of America.

to shine *in* the atmosphere. As I stood looking at it, the Mate came up beside me. After about half a minute, he gave out a sudden exclamation :

‘Hark!’ he said, ‘did you hear that?’

‘No, Mr. Jackson,’ I replied. ‘What was it like?’

‘Listen!’ was all his reply, and I obeyed, and so for perhaps a couple of minutes we stood there in silence.

‘There!— There it is again!’ he exclaimed, suddenly, and in the same instant I heard it, a sound like low, strange growling far away in the North-East. For about fifteen seconds it lasted, and then died away in a low, hollow, moaning noise, that sounded indescribably dree. After that, for a space longer we stood listening, and so, at last, it came again, a far, faint, wild-beast growling away over the North-Eastern horizon. As it died away with that strange hollow note, the Mate touched my arm :

‘Go and call the Old Man,’ he said, meaning the Captain, ‘and while you’re down, have a look at the barometer.’ In both of these matters I obeyed him, and in a few moments the Captain was on deck, standing beside the Mate—listening.

‘How’s the glass?’ asked the Mate, as I came up.

‘Steady,’ I answered, and at that he nodded his head, and resumed his listening. Yet, though we stood silent, maybe for the better part of half an hour, there came no further repetition of that weird, far-off growling, and so, as the glass was steady, no serious notice was taken of the matter.

That evening we experienced a sunset of quite indescribable gorgeousness, which had, to me, an unnatural glow about it, especially in the way in which it lit up the surface of the sea, which was, at this time, stirred by a slight evening breeze. Evidently, the Captain was of the opinion that it foreboded something in the way of ill weather; for he gave orders for the watch on deck to shorten sail, which was done. By the time the men had got down from aloft, the sun had set, and the evening was fading into dusk; yet, despite that, all the sky to the North-East was full of the most vivid red and orange; this being, it will be remembered, the direction from which we had heard earlier that sullen growling. It was about this time, I remember, that I heard the Mate remark to the Captain that we were in for bad weather, and that it was his belief a cyclone was coming down upon us; but this the Captain, who was quite a young fellow, pooh-poohed, telling him that he pinned *his* faith to the barometer, which was perfectly

steady. Yet I could see that the Mate was by no means so sure, but forbore to press further his opinion against his superior's.

Presently, as the night came down upon the world, the orange tints went out of the sky, and only a sombre, threatening red was left, with a strangely bright rift of white light running horizontally across it, about twenty degrees above the North-Eastern horizon. This lasted for nigh on to half an hour, and so did it impress the crew with a sense of something impending, that many of them crouched, staring over the port rail, until long after it had faded into the general greyness. That night, I recollect, it was my watch from midnight until four in the morning. When the boy came down to wake me, he told me that it had been lightning during the past watch. Even as he spoke, a bright, bluish glare lit up the porthole; but there was no succeeding thunder. I sprang hastily from my bunk and dressed; then, seizing my camera, ran out on deck. I opened the shutter, and the next instant—flash! a great stream of electricity sprang out of the zenith.

Directly afterwards the Mate called to me from the break of the poop to know whether I had managed to secure *that* one. I replied Yes, I thought I had, and at that he told me to come up on to the poop beside him and have a further try from there; for he, the Captain, and the Second Mate were much interested in my photographic hobby, and did all in their power to aid me in the securing of successful snaps.

That the Mate was uneasy, I very soon perceived; for presently, a little while after he had relieved the Second Mate, he ceased his pacing of the poop-deck and came and leant over the rail alongside of me.

'I wish to goodness the Old Man would have her shortened right down to lower topsails,' he said, a moment later, in a low voice. 'There's some rotten, dirty weather knocking around. I can smell it!' And he raised his head and sniffed at the air.

'Why not shorten her down on your own?' I asked him.

'Can't!' he replied. 'The Old Man's left orders not to touch anything, but to call him if any change occurs. He goes *too d—n* much by the barometer to suit me, and won't budge a rope's end because it's steady.'

All this time the lightning had been playing at frequent intervals across the sky; but now there came several gigantic flashes, seeming extraordinarily near to the vessel, pouring down out of a great rift in the clouds veritable torrents of electric fluid. I switched

open the shutter of my camera, and pointed the lens upward; the following instant I secured a magnificent photograph of a great flash which, bursting down from the same rift, divided to the East and West in a sort of vast electric arch. For perhaps a minute we waited, thinking that such a flash *must* be followed by thunder, but none came. Instead, from the darkness to the North-East, there sounded a faint, far-drawn-out wailing noise that seemed to echo queerly across the quiet sea. And after that—silence. The Mate stood upright and faced round at me.

‘Do you know,’ he said, ‘only once before in my life have I heard anything like that, and that was before the cyclone in which the “Lancing” and the “Eurasian” were lost in the Indian Ocean.’

‘Do you think then there’s *really* any danger of a cyclone now?’ I asked him, with something of a little thrill of excitement.

‘I think——’ he began to reply, and then stopped and swore suddenly. ‘Look!’ he said, in a loud voice. . . . ‘Look! “Stalk” lightning, as I’m a living man!’ And he pointed to the North-East. ‘Photograph that while you’ve got the chance; you’ll never have another as long as you live!’

I looked in the direction which he indicated, and there, sure enough, were great, pale, flickering streaks and tongues of flame *rising apparently out of the sea*. They remained steady for some ten or fifteen seconds, and in that time I was able to take a snap of them. This photograph, as I discovered when I came to develop the negative, has not, I regret to say, taken regard of a strange, indefinable dull-red glare that lit up the horizon at the same time; but, as it is, it remains to me a treasured record of a form of electrical phenomenon but seldom seen, even by those whose good, or ill, fortune has allowed them to come face to face with a cyclonic storm. Before leaving this incident I would once more impress upon the reader that this strange lightning was *not* descending from the atmosphere, but *rising from the sea*.

It was after I had secured this last snap that the Mate declared it to be his conviction that a great cyclonic storm was coming down upon us from the North-East, and with that—for about the twentieth time that watch—he went below to consult the barometer. He came back in about ten minutes to say that it was still steady; but that he had called the Old Man and told him about the ‘Stalk’ lightning; yet the Captain, having heard from him that the glass remained steady, refused to be alarmed; but had promised to come

up and take a look round. This, in a short while, he did; but, as Fate would have it, there was no further display of the 'Stalk' lightning, and, as the other kind had now become no more than an occasional dull glare behind the clouds to the North-East, he retired once more, leaving orders to be called if there were any change in either the glass or the weather.

With the daylight there came a change, a low, slow-moving scud driving down from the North-East, and drifting across the face of the newly risen sun, which was shining with a queer, unnatural glare. Indeed, so stormy and be-burred looked the sun, that I could have applied to it with truth that line :

And the red sun all bearded with the storm,

to describe its threatening aspect.

The glass also showed a change at last, rising a little for a short while and then dropping about a tenth, and at that the Mate hurried down to inform the Skipper, who was speedily up on deck. Yet he refused to shorten her down any further, remarking that such light airs as we had were fair, and he was not going to throw away a fine fair wind for any 'old woman's fancies.' Presently the wind began to freshen; but the orange-red burr about the sun remained, and also it seemed to me that the tint of the water had a 'bad weather' look about it. I mentioned this to the Mate, and he nodded agreement, but said nothing in so many words, for the Captain was standing near. By seven bells (3.30 A.M.) the wind had freshened so much that we were lying over to it with a big cant of the decks, and making a good twelve knots under nothing higher than the main t'gallant.

Presently, at eight bells, we were relieved by the other watch, and went below for a short sleep. At eight o'clock, when again I came on deck, I found that the sea had begun to rise somewhat, but that otherwise the weather was much as it had been when I left the decks, save that the sun was hidden by a heavy squall to windward which was coming down upon us. Some fifteen minutes later it struck the ship, making the foam fly and carrying away the main topsail sheet. Immediately upon this the heavy iron ring in the clew of the sail began to thrash and beat about, as the sail flapped in the wind, striking great blows against the steel yard; but the clewline was manned, and some of the men went aloft to repair the damage, after which the sail was once more sheeted home, and we continued to carry on. About this time the Mate sent me down

into the saloon to take another look at the glass, and I found that it had fallen a further tenth. When I reported this to him he had the main t'gallant taken in, but hung on to the mainsail, waiting for eight bells, when the whole crowd would be on deck to give a hand. We had by this begun to ship water, and most of us were speedily very thoroughly soused; yet we got the sail off her, and she rode the easier for the relief.

A little before one o'clock in the afternoon I went out on deck to have a final 'squint' at the weather, before turning in for a short sleep, and found that the wind had freshened considerably, the seas striking the counter of the vessel at times, and flying to a considerable height in foam. At four o'clock, when once more I appeared on deck, I discovered the spray flying over us with a good deal of freedom, and the solid water coming aboard occasionally in odd tons. Yet, so far, there was, *to a sailorman*, nothing worthy of note in the severity of the weather. It was blowing merely a moderately heavy gale, before which, under our six topsails and foresail, we were making a good twelve knots an hour to the Southward. Indeed, it seemed to me at this time that the Captain was right in his belief that we were not in for any very dirty weather, and I said as much to the Mate, whereat he laughed somewhat bitterly.

'Don't you make any sort of mistake!' he said, and pointed to leeward, where continual flashes of lightning darted down from a dark bank of cloud. 'We're already within the borders of the cyclone. We are travelling, so I take it, about a knot slower an hour to the South than the bodily forward movement of the storm, so that you may reckon it's overtaking us at the rate of something like a mile an hour. Later on, I expect, it'll get a move on it, and then a torpedo boat wouldn't catch it! This bit of a breeze that we're having now'—and he gestured to windward with his elbow—'is only fluff—nothing more than the outer fringe of the advancing cyclone! Keep your eye lifting to the North-East, and keep your ears open. Wait until you hear the thing yelling at you as loud as a million mad tigers!'

He came to a pause, and knocked the ashes out of his pipe; then he slid the empty 'weapon' into the side pocket of his long oilskin coat. And all the time I could see that he was ruminating.

'Mark my words,' he said at last, and speaking with great deliberation. 'Within twelve hours it'll be upon us!'

He shook his head at me. Then he added:

'Within twelve hours, my boy, you and I and every other soul on this blessed packet may be down there in the cold!' And the brute pointed downward into the sea, and grinned cheerfully at me.

It was our watch that night from eight to twelve; but, except that the wind freshened a trifle hourly, nothing of note occurred during our watch. The wind was blowing just a good fresh gale, and giving us all we wanted to keep the ship doing her best under topsails and foresail. At midnight I went below for a sleep. When I was called at four o'clock, I found a very different state of affairs. The day had broken, and showed the sea in a very confused state, with a tendency to run up into heaps, and there was a good deal less wind; but what struck me as most remarkable, and brought home with uncomfortable force the Mate's warning of the previous day, was the colour of the sky, which seemed to be everywhere one great glare of gloomy, orange-coloured light, streaked here and there with red. So intense was this glare that the seas, as they rose clumsily into heaps, caught and reflected the light in an extraordinary manner, shining and glittering gloomily, like vast moving mounds of liquid flame: the whole presenting an effect of astounding and uncanny grandeur.

I made my way up on to the poop, carrying my camera. There I met the Mate.

'You'll not want that pretty little box of yours,' he remarked, and tapped my camera. 'I guess you'll find a coffin more useful.'

'Then it's coming?' I said.

'Look!' was all his reply, and he pointed into the North-East.

I saw in an instant what it was at which he pointed. It was a great black wall of cloud that seemed to cover about seven points of the horizon, extending almost from North to East, and reaching upward some fifteen degrees towards the zenith. The intense, solid blackness of this cloud was astonishing, and threatening to the beholder, seeming, indeed, to be more like a line of great black cliffs standing out of the sea, than a mass of thick vapour. I glanced aloft, and saw that the other watch were securing the mizzen upper topsail. At the same moment the Captain appeared on deck, and walked over to the Mate.

'Glass has dropped another tenth, Mr. Greyson,' he remarked, and glanced to windward. 'I think we'd better have the fore and main upper topsails off her.' Scarcely had he given the order before the Mate was down on the maindeck, shouting: 'Fore and main topsail hal'yards, lower away! Man clewlines and spillinglines!'

So eager was he to have the sail off her. By the time that the upper topsails were furled I noted that the red glare had gone out of the greater part of the sky to windward, and a stiffish-looking squall was bearing down upon us. Away more to the North I saw that the black rampart of clouds had disappeared, and in place thereof it seemed to me that the clouds in that quarter were assuming a hard, tufted appearance, and changing their shapes with surprising rapidity. The sea also at this time was remarkable, acting uneasily, and hurling up queer little mounds of foam, which the passing squall caught and spread. All these points the Mate noted, for I heard him urging the Captain to take in the foresail and mizzen lower topsail. Yet this the Skipper seemed unwilling to do, but finally agreed to have the mizzen topsail off her. Whilst the men were up at this, the wind dropped abruptly in the tail of the squall, the vessel rolling heavily, and taking water and spray with every roll.

Now I want the reader to try to understand exactly how matters were at this particular and crucial moment. The wind had dropped entirely, and with the dropping of the wind a thousand different sounds broke harshly upon the ear, sounding almost unnatural in their distinctness, and impressing the ear with a sense of discomfort. With each roll of the ship there came a chorus of creaks and groans from the swaying masts and gear, and the sails slatted with a damp, disagreeable sound. Beyond the ship there was the constant harsh murmur of the sea, occasionally changing to a low roar, as one broke near us. One other sound there was that punctuated all these, and that was the loud, slapping blows of the seas as they hove themselves clumsily against the ship; and, for the rest, there was a strange sense of silence. Then, as sudden as the report of a heavy gun, a great bellowing came out of the North and East, and died away into a series of muttered growls. It was not thunder. *It was the Voice of the approaching Cyclone.*

In the same instant, the Mate nudged my shoulder and pointed, and I saw, with a great feeling of surprise, that a large waterspout had formed about two hundred yards astern, and was coming towards us. All about the base of it the sea was foaming in a strange manner, and the whole thing seemed to have a curious luminous quality.

It was in the first moments of astonishment, as I watched it, that I heard the Mate shout something to the Skipper about the foresail, and I realised suddenly that the thing was coming

straight for the ship. I ran hastily to the taffrail, raised my camera, and snapped it, and then, as it seemed to tower right up above me, gigantic, I ran backwards in sudden fright. In the same instant there came a blinding flash of lightning, almost in my face, followed instantaneously by a tremendous roar of thunder, and I saw that the thing had burst within about fifty yards of the ship. The sea, immediately beneath where it had been, leapt up in a great hummock of solid water and foam, as though something as big as a house had been cast into the ocean. Then, rushing towards us, it struck the stern of the vessel, flying as high as our topsail yards in spray, and knocking me backwards on to the deck.

As I stood up and hurriedly wiped the water from my camera, I heard the Mate shout out to know if I were hurt, and then, in the same moment, and before I could reply, he cried out :

‘It’s coming! Look out, everybody! Hold on for your lives!’

Directly afterwards a shrill yelling noise seemed to fill the whole sky with a deafening, piercing sound. I glanced hastily over the port quarter. In that direction the whole surface of the ocean seemed to be torn up into the air in monstrous clouds of spray. The yelling sound passed into a vast scream, and the next instant the cyclone was upon us. Immediately the air was so full of flying spray that I could not see a yard before me, and the wind slapped me back against the teak companion, pinning me there for a few moments helpless. The ship heeled over to a terrible angle, so that for some seconds I thought we were going to capsize. Then, with a sudden lurch, she hove herself upright, and I became able to see about me a little, by switching the water from my face and shielding my eyes. Near to me the helmsman—a little Dago—was clinging to the wheel, looking like nothing so much as a drowned monkey, and palpably frightened to such an extent that he could hardly stand upright.

From him I looked round at so much of the vessel as I could see, and up at the spars, and so, presently, I discovered how it was that she had righted. The mizzen topmast was gone just below the heel of the t’gallantmast, and the fore topmast a little above the cap. The main topmast alone stood. It was the losing of these spars which had eased her, and allowed her to right so suddenly. Marvellously enough, the foresail—a small, new, No. 1 canvas stormsail—had stood the strain, and was now bellying out, with a high foot, the sheets evidently having surged under the wind pressure. What was more extraordinary was that the fore and

main lower topsails were standing, and this despite the fact that the bare upper spars on both the fore and mizzen masts had been carried away.

And now, the first awful burst of the cyclone having passed with the righting of the vessel, the three sails stood, though tested to their utmost, and the ship, under the tremendous urging force of the storm, was tearing forward at a high speed through the seas. I glanced down now at myself and camera. Both were soaked; yet, as I discovered later, the latter would still take photographs. I struggled forward to the break of the poop, and glanced down on to the maindeck. The seas were breaking aboard every moment, and the spray flying over us continually in huge white clouds. And in my ears was the incessant, wild, roaring scream of the monster whirl-storm.

Then I saw the Mate. He was up against the lee-rail, chopping at something with a hatchet. At times the water left him visible to his knees; anon, he was completely submerged; but ever there was the whirl of his weapon amid the chaos of water, as he hacked and cut at the gear that held the mizzen t'gallant-mast crashing against the side. I saw him glance round once, and he beckoned with the hatchet to a couple of his watch who were fighting their way aft along the streaming decks. He did not attempt to shout; for no shout could have been heard in the incredible roaring of the wind. Indeed, so vastly loud was the noise made by this element that I had not even heard the topmasts carry away, though the sound of a large spar breaking will make as great a noise as the report of a big gun. The next instant, I had thrust my camera into one of the hencoops upon the poop, and turned to struggle aft to the companion way, for I knew it was no use going to the Mate's aid without axes.

Presently I was at the companion, and had the fastenings undone; then I opened the door, and sprang in on to the stairs. I slammed to the door, bolted it, and made my way below, and so, in a minute, had possessed myself of a couple of axes. With these I returned to the poop, fastening the companion doors carefully behind me, and so, in a little, was up to my neck in water on the maindeck, helping to clear away the wreckage. The second axe I had pushed into the hands of one of the men, and very soon we had the tangle cleared away. Then we scrambled away forrard along the decks, through the boiling swirls of foam and water that swept the vessel, as the seas thundered aboard, and

so we came to the assistance of the Second Mate, who was desperately busied, along with some of his watch, in clearing away the broken foretopmast and yards that were held by their gear, thundering against the side of the ship.

Yet it must not be supposed that we were to manage this piece of work without coming to some harm; for, just as we made an end of it, an enormous sea swept aboard, and dashed one of the men against a spare topmast that was lashed along inside the bulwarks below the pin-rail. When we managed to pull the poor senseless fellow out from underneath the spar, where the sea had jammed him, we found that his left arm and collar-bone were broken. We took him forrard to the fo'cas'le, and there, with rough surgery, made him as comfortable as we could, after which we left him but half conscious in his bunk. After that, several wet, weary hours were spent in rigging rough preventer stays. Then the rest of us, men as well as officers, made our way aft to the poop, there to wait, desperately ready to cope with any emergency where our poor futile human strength might aid to our salvation. With great difficulty the carpenter had managed to sound the well, and, to our delight, found that we were not making any water; so that the blows of the broken spars had done us no vital harm.

By mid-day the following seas had risen to a truly formidable height, and two hands were working half naked at the wheel; for any carelessness in steering would most certainly have had serious consequences. In the course of the afternoon the Mate and I went down into the saloon to get something to eat, and here, out of the deafening roar of the wind, I managed to get a short chat with my senior officer. Talking about the waterspout which had so immediately preceded the first rush of the cyclone, I made mention of its luminous appearance, to which he replied that it was due probably to a vast electric action going on between the clouds and the sea. After that I asked him why the Captain did not heave to, and ride the storm out, instead of running before it, and risking being pooped, or broaching to. To this the Mate made reply that we were right in the line of translation—in other words, that we were directly in the track of the vortex, or centre, of the cyclone—and that the Skipper was doing his best to edge the ship to leeward, before the centre, with the awful pyramidal sea, should overtake us.

'If we can't manage to get out of the way,' he concluded

grimly, 'you'll probably have a chance to photograph something that you'll never have time to develop!' I asked him how he knew that the ship was directly in the track of the vortex, and he replied that the facts that the wind was getting steadily worse, and not hauling, with the barometer constantly falling, were sure signs. And soon after that we returned to the deck.

As I have said, at mid-day the seas were truly formidable; but by 4 P.M. they were so much worse that it was impossible to pass fore or aft along the decks, the water breaking aboard as much as a hundred tons at a time, and sweeping all before it. All this time the roaring and *howling* of the cyclone was so incredibly loud that no word spoken, or shouted, out on deck, even though right into one's ear, could be heard; so that the utmost we could do to convey ideas to one another was to make signs. And so, because of this, and to get for a little out of the painful and exhausting pressure of the wind, each of the officers would in turn—sometimes singly and sometimes two at once—go down to the saloon for a short rest and smoke. It was in one of these brief 'smoke-ohs' that the Mate told me the vortex of the cyclone was within eighty miles of us, and coming down on us at something like twenty knots an hour, which, as this speed exceeded ours by perhaps twelve to fifteen miles an hour, made it probable that it would be upon us before midnight.

'Is there no chance of getting out of the way?' I asked. 'Couldn't we haul her up a trifle, and cut across the track a bit quicker than we are doing?'

'No,' replied the Mate, and shook his head thoughtfully. 'The seas would make a clean breach over us if we tried that. It's a case of "run till you're blind, and pray till you bust,"' he concluded, with a certain despondent brutality.

I nodded assent, for I knew that it was true; and after that we were silent. A few minutes later we went up on deck. There we found that the wind had increased, and blown the foresail bodily away; yet, despite the greater weight of the wind, there had come a rift in the clouds, through which the sun was shining with a queer brightness. I glanced at the Mate, and smiled, for it seemed to me a good omen; but he shook his head, as one who should say: 'It is no good omen, but a sign of something worse coming.' That he was right in refusing to be assured I had speedy proof, for within ten minutes the sun had vanished, and the clouds seemed to be right down upon our mast-heads, great bellying webs of

black vapour that seemed almost to mingle with the flying clouds of foam and spray. The wind appeared to gain strength minute by minute, rising into an abominable scream, so piercing at times as to seem to pain the ear-drums. In this wise an hour passed, the ship racing onward under her two topsails, seeming to have lost no speed with the losing of the foresail, though it is possible that she was more under water forrard than she had been. Then, about 5.30 P.M., I heard a louder roar in the air above us, so deep and tremendous that it seemed to daze and stun one; and, in the same instant, the two topsails were blown out of the bolt-ropes, and one of the hencoops was lifted bodily off the poop, and hurled into the air, descending with an *inaudible* crash on to the maindeck. Luckily, it was not the one into which I had thrust my camera.

With the losing of the topsails, we might be very truly described as running under bare poles, for now we had not a single stitch of sail set anywhere. Yet so furious was the increasing wind, so tremendous the weight of it, that the vessel, though urged forward only by the pressure of the element upon her naked spars and hull, managed to keep ahead of the monstrous following seas, which now were grown to truly awesome proportions. The next hour or two I remember only as a time that spread out monotonously. A time miserable and dazing, and dominated always by the deafening, roaring scream of the storm: a time of wetness and dismalness, in which I knew, more than saw, that the ship wallowed on and on through the interminable seas. And so, hour by hour, the wind increased as the vortex of the cyclone—the ‘death-patch,’ as it has been called—drew nearer and ever nearer.

Night came on early, or, if not night, a darkness that was fully its equivalent. And now I was able to see how tremendous was the electrical action that was going on all about us. There seemed to be no lightning flashes, but, instead, there came at times across the darkness queer luminous shudders of light. I am not acquainted with any word that better describes this extraordinary electrical phenomenon than ‘shudders’ of light—broad, dull shudders of light, that came in undefined belts across the black, thunderous canopy of clouds, which seemed so low that our main truck must have ‘puddled’ them with every roll of the ship. A further sign of atmospheric electricity was to be seen in the ‘corpse-candles’ which ornamented every yard-arm. Not only were they upon the

yard-arms, but occasionally several at a time would glide up and down one or more of the fore and aft stays, at whiles swinging off to one side or the other, as the ship rolled, the sight having in it a distinct touch of weirdness.

It was an hour or so later, I believe a little after 9 P.M., that I witnessed the most striking manifestation of electrical action that I have ever seen, this being neither more nor less than a display of aurora borealis lightning. It occurred suddenly. First a ripple of 'Stalk' lightning showed away over the oncoming seas to the northward; then suddenly a red glare shone out in the sky, and, immediately afterwards, vast streamers of greenish flame appeared above the red glare. These lasted, perhaps, half a minute, expanding and contracting over the sky with a curious quivering motion. The whole formed a truly awe-inspiring spectacle. And then, slowly, the whole thing faded, and only the blackness of the night remained, slit in all directions by the phosphorescent crests of the seas as they thundered by.

I don't know whether I can convey any vivid impression of our case and chances at this time. It is so difficult, unless one has been through a similar experience, even to comprehend fully the incredible loudness of the wind. Imagine a noise as loud as the loudest thunder you have ever heard; then imagine this noise to last hour after hour, without intermission, and to have in it a hideously threatening hoarse note, and, blending with this, a constant yelling scream that rises at times to such a pitch that the very ear-drums seem to experience pain, and then, perhaps, you will be able to comprehend merely the amount of *sound* that has to be endured during the passage of one of these storms. And then, the *force* of the wind! Have you ever faced a wind so powerful that it splayed your lips apart, whether you would or not, laying your teeth bare to view? This is only a little thing; but it may help you to conceive something of the strength of a wind that will play such antics with one's mouth. The sensation it gives is extremely disagreeable—a sense of foolish impotence is how I can best describe it.

Another thing: I learned that, with my face to the wind, I could not breathe. This is a statement baldly put, but it should help me somewhat in my endeavour to bring home to you the force of the wind, as exemplified in the minor details of my experience. To give some idea of the wind's power, as shown in a larger way, one of the lifeboats on the after skids was up-ended against

the mizzen-mast, and there crushed flat by the wind, as though a monstrous invisible hand had pinched it. Does this help you a little to gain an idea of wind-force never met with in a thousand ordinary lives ?

Apart from the wind, it must be borne in mind that the gigantic seas pitch the ship about in a most abominable manner. Indeed, I have seen the stern of a ship hove up to such a height that I could see the seas ahead over the foretopsail yards, and when I explain that these will be something like seventy to eighty feet above the deck, you may be able to imagine what manner of sea is to be met with in a great cyclonic storm. Regarding this matter of the size and ferocity of the seas, I possess a photograph that was taken about ten o'clock at night. This was photographed by the aid of flashlight, an operation in which the Captain assisted me. We filled an old percussion pistol with flashlight powder ; then, when I was ready, I opened the shutter of the camera, and pointed it over the stern into the darkness. The Captain fired the pistol, and, in the instantaneous great blaze of light that followed, I saw what manner of sea it was that pursued us. To say it was a mountain is to be futile. *It was like a moving cliff.*

As I snapped to the shutter of my camera, the question flashed into my brain : ' Are we going to live it out, after all ? ' And, suddenly, it came home to me that I was a little man, in a little ship, in the midst of a very great sea. And then fresh knowledge came to me ; I knew, abruptly, that it would not be a very difficult thing to be afraid. The knowledge was new, and took me more in the stomach than the heart. Afraid ! I had been in so many storms that I had forgotten they might be things to fear. Hitherto my sensation at the thought of bad weather had been chiefly a feeling of annoyed repugnance, due to many memories of dismal wet nights, in wetter clothes. But *fear*—no ! And now this hateful sense of insecurity !

I turned from the taffrail, and hurried below to wipe the lens and cover of my camera ; for the whole air was full of driving spray, that soaked everything, and hurt the face intolerably, being driven with such force by the storm.

Whilst I was drying my camera, the Mate came down for a minute's breathing-space.

' Still at it ? ' he said.

' Yes,' I replied ; and I noticed, half consciously, that he made

no effort to light his pipe, as he stood with his arm crooked over an empty brass candle-bracket.

'You'll never develop them,' he remarked.

'Of course I shall!' I replied, half crossly; but with a horrid little sense of chilliness at his words, which came so unaptly upon my mind, so lately perturbed by uncomfortable thoughts.

'You'll see,' he replied, with a sort of brutal terseness. 'We sha'n't be above water by midnight!'

'You *can't* tell,' I said. 'What's the use of meeting trouble? Vessels have lived through worse than this!'

'Have they?' he said, very quietly. 'Not many vessels have lived through worse than what's to come. I suppose you know we expect to meet the centre in less than an hour?'

'Well,' I replied, 'anyway, I shall go on taking photos. I guess if we come through all right, I shall have something to show people ashore.'

He laughed, a queer, little, bitter laugh.

'You may as well do that as anything else,' he said. 'We can't do anything to help ourselves. If we're not pooped before the centre reaches us, IT'll finish us in quick time!'

Then that cheerful officer of mine turned slowly, and made his way on deck, leaving me, as may be imagined, particularly exhilarated by his assurances. Presently I followed, and, having barred the companion-way behind me, struggled forward to the break of the poop, clutching blindly at any holdfast in the darkness. And so, for a space, we waited in the storm—the wind bellowing fiendishly, and our main decks one chaos of broken water, swirling to and fro in the darkness.

It was a little later that someone plucked me hard by the sleeve, and, turning, I made out with difficulty that it was the Captain trying to attract my attention. I caught his wrist, to show that I comprehended what he desired, and, at that, he dropped on his hands and knees, and crawled aft along the streaming poop-deck, I following, my camera held between my teeth by the handle. He reached the companion-way, and unbarred the starboard door; then crawled through, and I after him. I fastened the door, and made my way in his wake to the saloon. Here he turned to me. He was a curiously devil-may-care sort of man, and I found that he had brought me down to explain that the vortex would be upon us very soon, and that I should have the chance of a lifetime to get a snap of the much-talked-of pyramidal sea. And,

in short, that he wished me to have everything prepared, and the pistol ready loaded with flashlight powder; for, as he remarked: 'If we get through, it'll be a rare curiosity to show some of those unbelieving devils ashore.' In a little we had everything ready, and then we made our way once more up on deck, the Captain placing the pistol in the pocket of his silk oil-skin coat.

There, together, we waited under the after weather-cloth. The Second Mate I could not see, but occasionally I caught a vague sight of the First Mate, standing near the after binnacle, and obviously watching the steering. Apart from the puny halo that emanated from the binnacle, all else was blind darkness, save for the phosphorescent lights of the overhanging crests of the seas.

And above us and around us, filling all the sky with sound, was the incessant mad yowling of the cyclone, the noise so vast, and the volume and mass of the wind so enormous that I am impressed now, looking back upon the scene, with a sense of having been in a semi-stunned condition through those last minutes.

I am conscious now that a vague time passed. A time of noise and wetness, and lethargy. Then, abruptly, a tremendous flash of lightning burst through the clouds. It was followed almost directly by another, which seemed to rive the sky apart. Then, so quickly that the succeeding thunderclap was *audible* to our wind-deafened ears, the wind ceased, and, in the comparative, but hideously unnatural, silence, I caught the Captain's voice shouting:

'The Vortex—quick!'

Even as I pointed my camera over the rail, and opened the shutter, my brain was working with a preternatural avidity, drinking in a thousand uncanny sounds and echoes that seemed to come upon me from every quarter, brutally distinct against the background of the cyclone's receding howling. There were the harsh, bursting, frightening, intermittent noises of the seas, and, mingling with these, the shrill, hissing scream of the foam; the dismal sounds, that suggested dankness, of water swirling over our decks, and the faintly-heard creaking of the gear and shattered spars; and then—*flash*, in the same instant in which I had taken in these varied impressions, the Captain had fired the pistol, and I saw the Pyramidal Sea—a sight never to be forgotten, a sight rather for the dead than the living, a sea such as I could never

have imagined, boiling and bursting upward in monstrous clots of water and foam as big as houses. I heard, without knowing I heard, the Captain's expression of amazement. Then a thunderous roar was in my ears. One of those vast, flying hills of water had struck the ship, and, for some moments, I had a sickening feeling that she was sinking beneath me. The water cleared, and I found myself clinging to the weather-cloth staunchion; the weather-cloth had gone. I wiped my eyes, and coughed dizzily for a little; then I glanced round for the Captain. I could see something dimly up against the rail, something that moved and stood upright. I called out to know if it were the Captain, and whether he were all right, to which he replied, heartily enough, but with a gasp, that he was 'All right so far.'

From him I glanced across to the wheel. There was no light in the binnacle, and, later, I found that it had been washed away, and with it one of the helmsmen. The other man, also, was gone; but we discovered him, nigh an hour later, jammed half through the rail that ran round the poop. To leeward, I heard the Mate singing out to know whether we were safe; to which both the Captain and I shouted a reply so as to assure him. It was then I became aware that my camera had been washed out of my hands. I found it eventually among a tangle of ropes and gear to leeward. Extraordinarily enough, the last photograph I had taken was practically unharmed.

Again and again the great hills of water struck the vessel, seeming to rise up on every side at once—towering, live pyramids of brine, hurling upward with a harsh, unceasing roaring. From her taffrail to her knight-heads the ship was swept fore and aft, so that no living thing could have existed a moment down upon the maindeck, which was practically submerged. Indeed, the whole vessel seemed at times to be lost beneath the chaos of water that thundered down and over her in clouds and cataracts of brine and foam, so that each moment seemed like to be our last. Occasionally I would hear the hoarse voice of the Captain or the Mate calling through the gloom to one another, or to the figures of the clinging men. And then again would come the thunder of water, as the seas burst over us. 'And all this in an almost impenetrable darkness, save when some unnatural glare of lightning sundered the clouds, and lit up the thirty-mile cauldron which had engulfed us. And anon, round about, seeming to come from every point of the horizon, sounded a vast, but distant, bellow-

ing and screaming noise, which now appeared to be growing louder upon our port beam. It was the storm circling round about us.

Some time later there sounded an intense roar in the air above the ship, and then came a far-off shrieking, that grew rapidly into a mighty, whistling scream, and a minute afterwards a most tremendous gust of wind struck the ship on her port side, hurling her over on to her starboard broadside. For many minutes she lay there, her decks under water almost up to the hatches. Then she righted, sullenly and slowly, freeing herself from, maybe, half a thousand tons of water. Again there came a short period of windlessness, and then once more the yelling of an approaching gust. It struck us; but now the vessel had paid off before the wind, and she was not again forced over on to her side. From now onward we drove forward over vast seas, with the cyclone bellowing and wailing over us in one unbroken roar. . . . *The vortex had passed*, and, could we but last out a few more hours, then might we hope to win through.

With the return of the wind, the Mate and one of the men had taken the wheel; but, despite the most careful steering, we were pooped several times, for the seas were hideously broken and confused, we being in the wake of the vortex, and the wind not having had time as yet to smash the pyramidal sea into the more regular storm rollers, which, though huge in size, give a vessel a chance to rise to them. It was later that some of us, headed by the Mate, who had relinquished his place at the wheel to one of the men, ventured down on to the maindeck with axes and knives to clear away the wreckage of some of the spars which we had lost in the vortex. Many a grim risk we ran in that hour; but we cleared the wreck, and, after that, scrambled back, dripping, to the poop, where the steward, looking woefully white and scared, served out rum to us from a wooden deck-bucket.

Slowly, with an undreamt-of slowness, the remainder of the night passed, minute by minute, and at last the day broke in a weary dawn, the sky full of a stormy, sickly light. On every side tumbled an interminable chaos of seas. And the vessel herself!—A wreck she appeared. The mizzen-mast had gone some dozen feet above the deck; the main-topmast had gone, and so had the jigger-topmast. I struggled forrard to the break of the poop, and glanced along the decks. The boats had gone. All the iron scupper doors either were bent or had disappeared. On the starboard side, opposite to the stump of the mizzen-mast, was a great

ragged gap in the steel bulwarks, where the mast had struck when it carried away. In several other places the t'gallant-rail was either smashed or dinged where it had been struck by falling spars. The side of the teak deckhouse had been stove, and the water was roaring in and out with each roll of the ship. The sheep-pen had vanished, and so, as I discovered later, had the pigsty. Further forrard my glance went, and I saw that the sea had breached the bulkhead across the after end of the fo'cas'le, and with each biggish sea that we shipped, a torrent of water drove in, and then floated out, sometimes bearing with it an odd board, or perhaps a man's boot, or some article of wearing apparel. In two places on the maindeck I saw men's sea-chests washing to and fro in the water that streamed over the deck. And suddenly there came into my mind a memory of the poor fellow who had broken his arm when we were cutting loose the wreck of the fore-topmast.

Already the strength of the cyclone was spent, so far, at least, as we were concerned, and I was thinking of making a try for the fo'cas'le, when, close beside me, I heard the Mate's voice. I turned with a little start. He had evidently noticed the breach in the bulkhead, for he told me to watch a chance, and see if we could not get forrard. This we did, though not without a further thorough sousing, as we were still shipping water by the score of tons. Moreover, the risk was considerably greater than might be conceived, for the doorless scupper-ports offered uncomfortable facilities for going gurgling out into the ocean along with a ton or two of brine from the decks.

We reached the fo'cas'le, and pulled open the lee door. We stepped inside. It was like stepping into a dank, gloomy cavern. Water was dripping from every beam and staunchion. We struggled across the slippery deck to where we had left the sick man in his bunk. In the dim light we saw that man and bunk, everything, had vanished; only the bare steel sides of the vessel remained. Every bunk and fitting in the place had been swept away, and all of the men's sea-chests. Nothing remained, save, it might be, an odd soaked rag of clothing or a sodden bunk-board. The Mate and I looked at one another in silence. 'Poor devil!' he said. He repeated his expression of pity, staring hard at the place where had been the bunk; then, grave of face, he turned to go out on deck. As he did so, a heavier sea than usual broke aboard, rushed forrard along the decks, and swept in

through the broken bulkhead and the lee doorway. It swirled round the sides, caught us, and threw us down in a heap; then swept out through the breach and the doorway, carrying the Mate with it. He managed to grasp the lintel of the doorway, else, I do believe, he would have gone out through one of the open scupper-traps—a doubly hard fate, after having come safely through the cyclone.

Outside of the fo'cas'le I saw that the ladders leading up to the head had both gone; but I managed to scramble up. Here I found that both anchors had been washed away, and the rails all round; only the bare staunchions remaining. Beyond the bows, the jibboom had gone, and all the gear was dragged inboard over the fo'cas'le head, or trailing in the sea. We made our way aft, and reported; then the roll was called, and we found that one else was missing, besides the two I have already mentioned, and the man we found jammed half through the poop-rails, who was now under the steward's care. From that time on the sea went down steadily, until, presently, it ceased to threaten us, and we proceeded to get the ship cleared up a bit; after which one watch turned in on the floor of the saloon, and the other was told to 'stand easy.'

Hour by hour through the day the sea went down, until it was difficult to believe that only a short twelve hours gone we had despaired for our lives. And so the evening came, calm and restful; the wind no more than a light summer's breeze, and the sea calming steadily. About seven bells that night a big steamer crossed our stern, and slowed down to ask us if we were in need of a tow; for, even by moonlight, it was easy to see our dismantled condition. This offer, however, Captain Avery refused; and, with many good wishes, the big vessel swung off into the moonlight, and so, presently, we were left alone.

When she had gone, the Captain, who had been walking the poop-deck along with the Mate, called across to me to know when I was going to develop those negatives.

'Never thought he'd need to,' interjected the Mate.

'Oh! you're an old croaker,' replied the Captain, laughing. 'Though I'll admit it *was* stiff.'

WILLIAM HOPE HODGSON.

A LETTER FROM A PORTUGUESE COUNTRY
HOUSE.

I.

JANUARY 1907.—I stand on my balcony this bright morning in mid-January, and look across the broad terrace, of which the roses will make such glory three months hence. Below it the ground falls steeply away, to sweep up again in fertile slopes, over whose richly red soil a green film is already creeping. Groups of olives make silver-grey clouds amid the corn of the writhen leafless vines, groves of orange trees throw long shadows westward, and here and there a sturdy medlar with its handsome coarse-ribbed foliage strikes a note of strong green against the grey lacework of almonds and peach, whose interwoven branches are still dreaming of the beauty to be born from them. Solitary and aloof, hanging forth listless leaves that seem to have robbed themselves of health and energy to lavish it in the atmosphere around, stand some half dozen eucalyptus, while two gigantic cedars make oases of shade impenetrable even to the brightest beams of noontide sun. The crest of the steeply rising slopes, all one rich mosaic of Egyptian red and soft lavender greys, and many shaded greens, forms to the west a skyline spiked with *chevaux de frise* of stone pines. Their straight and ruddy stems are like burnished copper pillars supporting a horizontal cloud of darkest blue. Suddenly the ridge sinks, and the vista thus opened reveals a glimpse of the white houses of Buarcos, daintily set against the blue mist that is the Atlantic. Melting into the turquoise haze above, it is impossible to say where ocean ends and sky begins, but for the diamond sparkle that radiates through the gauze of atmosphere and distance.

When the eye roves south across a billowy foreground of pine copse and fields of strong young corn, it overleaps Figueira's white strip of huddled houses—so Oriental of suggestion, with their unbroken white walls and flat roofs—to greet the procession of long-drawn breakers that roll in endlessly over the perilous bar at the mouth of the river Mondego, throwing behind them streaming veils of spray even on a morning so breathlessly calm as this.

The voice of the Atlantic is never entirely silent. To-day it is hushed to a murmurous sigh, like the droning recital of an aged mariner telling of the storms that he has weathered ; but last week it rose to organ pitch, and the universe seemed filled with the awful music, as the waves thundered in, lashed by the hurricane that howled and whistled and shrieked and moaned around the high-lying house in which I am a visitor, driving the rain in sudden squalls against the windows, and making night hideous with its suggestion of woe and disaster. But the tempest sank as suddenly as it came, and all again is calm and sunny stillness. The song of birds piping thin and sweet against a background of whispering ocean, the voice of the shepherd calling to his flocks as they trespass on the young corn, the melancholy plaint of distant wagon wheels, all seem rather to accentuate than to disturb the sense of profound calm.

On a day like this it is very good to be alive, and when night falls and the maids come with their great baskets of orange and olive logs, and giant pine cones and vine stumps—than which no fuel ever burnt more fast or merrily—it is good, too, to sit with upturned skirt opposite the leaping, crackling blaze, and settle down to a comfortable fireside gossip. This is the only house for miles around with an English fireplace. In Portugal generally provision for heating is only by means of the 'brazero' and its bed of glowing charcoal, which warms toes but not tops, and leaves you from the waist up an icicle, though from the waist down you may be a toast. Comfort, as we understand it, is considered superfluous, and many of those who shiver in misery throughout a winter longer than those who picture a south bathed in perpetual sunshine have any conception of, would shrink horrified from the bonfire in whose glorious warmth my aunt and I love to bask.

She is the prettiest of old ladies, this aunt of mine, with silver hair fine as spun glass, and cheeks of ivory flushed with softest rose, and her memory is stored with many a quaint picture of the past. It was her father who, imbued with a passion for all things English, after a quarter of a century spent under British rule, built this house with the aid of English architects and English importations of furniture and fittings. That was some sixty years ago, and the place, when finished, was looked upon by the whole countryside as the eighth wonder of the world. Not friends and neighbours alone came to gape and marvel ; but strangers from far and near would arrive in wagons drawn by slow-pacing oxen, and prefer

the request that they too might be allowed to inspect the Palaccio of Senhor Tomaz !

The rambling old house in those days was alive with youth and gaiety—to-day it is empty of all but Donna Emilia, her men and her maids and the stranger that is within her gates.

Of servants, by the way, a whole regiment may be had in this country for the wage of a good English cook. Her Portuguese sister (or brother) if 'professed,' can command as much as £12 per year ; but the lady who presides over my aunt's kitchen, in addition to her culinary duties, cares for pigs and ducks, fowls and turkeys, for £6 10s. Encarnação is the veriest gypsy that ever knotted a Turkey-red kerchief about her head, kilted a short print skirt high on her hips, and, in obedience only to express command, thrust small bare feet, brown as if carved out of mahogany, into dilapidated carpet slippers. She is a true child of the East. She squats cross-legged when she peels her potatoes and shells her peas, she squats when she sells the superfluous products of the Quinta in the market-place, she squats when in industrious mood she works at the sewing machine placed on a chair in front of her, she squats when in an idle mood she does nothing at all. But no ! there I am wrong. It is then she lies full length on the stone floor, or, if she be feeling particularly sybaritish, on the kitchen table. Dyonisia, the *criada grave* or ladies' maid, who, gigantic of stature and innocent of stays, is cross between a grenadier and a wet nurse, gets a similar wage of £6 10s. But Etelvina, the small roundabout and phlegmatic Etelvina, who only rouses up when the conjunction of widowhood and pink silk bows presented by my aunt's garters offends her sense of decorum, she has to content herself with £5 5s.—a grievous difference though, Donna Emilia declares, from the days when she paid her *cordón bleu* £2 a year and her waiting women some 10s. more. Nevertheless, it was in those good old times that the great store of golden ornament was bought. Few and far between are the latter-day servants who can show a tithe of the treasure painfully scraped together by the domestics of a vanished generation. Conceição, the 'general' of my friend Donna Ricarda, is one of the old-fashioned waiting-women of whom some isolated instances may still be found in patriarchal Portuguese households. Distrustful of Government bonds and Savings Banks, they invest their savings in pure gold with which to adorn themselves on high holidays and bonfire nights ; while, at a time of emergency, any small sum may be realised by clipping off here the link of a chain,

there the drop of an earring. Conceição, as she waits at table on the rare occasion of strangers being admitted to the family board, presents an appearance of quite barbaric magnificence. The band of her gay cotton skirt confines a sort of bed-jacket, her bare feet are only half concealed by heelless slippers, but her person is hung round with chains and necklaces of gold, while locket and brooches, ear- and finger-rings innumerable, all of the same precious metal and artistically worked, are scattered about her ample form. The thrifty peasants, the very fish-girls, too, lowest of all in the social scale, who help to unload the cargoes of salted cod, are resplendent at all times with heavy gold earrings, while the poorest of the poor come forth at festas gleaming and glittering with the savings of years.

It was also on an annual wage of £2 that the long cloaks of good black cloth, costing some £3 to £4 each without, and £6 to £8 with capes, were acquired. These 'capas' are seldom seen nowadays, and the kerchiefs of fine clear white muslin that accompanied them, and were so becoming to a former generation, have disappeared in their company. Shawls worn cornerwise and silken squares are their substitute; while for 'full dress' trimmed blouses are the order of the day, where once the bed-jacket was universal. Among the wives and daughters of the clerks and petty shopkeepers, hats have almost succeeded in ousting the mantilla; but they are unworn still of the labouring classes, except for the ancient 'pork-pie,' whose use can claim the sanction of centuries. The Portuguese who is fortunate, or in these days of phylloxera and competition unfortunate, enough to possess a 'Quinta' must be prepared to pay his feitor, or bailiff, if a capable man, 1s. 1d. a day in addition to giving him his food. He is engaged by the month. The head carter receives £12 a year, together with food and sleeping quarters. Under his care are the oxen, an important charge in a country where horses are never used for agricultural purposes. These two and the indoor servants expect their three meals a day, with wine and fish or meat at two of them, and have little to complain of in comparison with those that till the fields. This is mostly done by girls. But for them also times have changed. As many women at 3½d. per day as he cared to employ, my grandfather could always procure. Double this magnificent wage will hardly allure the labour necessary on his daughter's estate. Full 7d. a day (no food or other perquisite, however, and only day by day, bad weather forming a bar to employment), do these brown-skinned, black-

haired, black-eyed damsels demand, though for that they toil from sunrise to sunset, whatever the season may be. Two hours' respite is allowed from the noon-tide heat between Low Sunday and the Feast of the Conception. During the remainder of the year half that time must suffice for dinner and siesta. For breakfast, half an hour earlier in the day is allotted. This meal, as well as the nominally more important one, usually consists of a handful of salted sardinhas and a hunch of broa (bread made from Indian corn), while a sort of nondescript soup forms the evening repast. Men, working under the same conditions, receive from 1s. a day in the summer to 1s. 3d. in the winter. The laundress, too, does not unduly swell the domestic budget. All starching and ironing is done at home. Up till quite lately, the individual who washes for us (she is sister to my aunt's lawyer, but that's a detail) received no more than twelve hundred reis or 5s. 2d. monthly for scouring not only the linen of the master and the mistress and their visitors and of two men and three maid servants (white shirts are universally worn, never yet have I seen a coloured one in Portugal), but the bed and table linen and the countless sacks used for the storage of Indian corn and beans. Soap is usually supplied by the employer; but this notwithstanding, the lady of the wash-tub (or rather of the sluggish stream with its flat stones so handy for pounding and macerating) has struck, with the result that she now gets 1,500 reis (some 6s. 6d.) for the same amount of work. What is the world coming to?

This, by the way, is what all Figueira is asking itself to-day with reference to me! Yesterday I went for a walk, and all by myself. Lest this announcement should not create the sensation it is intended to evoke, let me hasten to add that it is only because I am an Englishwoman—and therefore, by inference, lost to all sense of decency—that I am permitted the privilege of unescorted promenade. Were I a native, I should be doomed to take the air in an hermetically sealed carriage attended by man and maid, if no more efficient duenna were forthcoming to keep an eye on me and my grey hairs, and woe to me if I extended my hand to male acquaintances, or let them pass on any but the 'other side.' Among my acquaintances is a gaunt and grizzled widow (she is the dress-maker, if you care to know) whose full half-century of years might be supposed to carry with them emancipation, but who screams with horror at the idea of being seen unchaperoned in the public street: 'Why, naturally, it would be thought I had an assignation.' And I know a girl whose distress is very real because her bosom

friend has removed from next door to next street, and (owing to lack of footmen and ladies' maids in the attenuated households) the frequent pop-in visits in which their souls delighted have consequently become impossible.

My walk was down the deeply rutted lane that leads between 'Quintas' to the little town of Figueira. It is a real 'red lane,' for its rich toned banks are ruddy in the afternoon sun, beneath their green cornices of thickly tangled scrub. Here and there they are tapestried with *mesembryanthemum* starred by flowers (for all the world like a certain kind of sea anemone) of pale bright citron or vivid magenta; here and there they are spiked by aloes wreathed round with clinging geranium whose scarlet blossoms gleam like spots of blood on the great notched upright blades. Occasionally an olive or a eucalyptus, a stone pine or an 'incenso'—that wide-spreading tree with the polished foliage whose botanical name I do not know, but which owes its popular one to the exquisite fragrance of its thickly clustering small white blossom—affords a patch of welcome shade, but for the most part the sun beats down pitilessly on the wayfarer. These are but few and far between. One or two peasant wives trot by, returning on their donkeys to the Serra, that long-drawn range of low hills to the north, on whose crest a procession of tiny windmills, all busily engaged in grinding away at Indian corn, make quaint outlines against the sky. The women's faces are bound round with black cloths, surmounted by round turbans of black felt, sole survival of some long-forgotten costume; their bodies are muffled in black shawls. A couple of girls pass; their shawls are worn in the graceful fashion of the women of India, draped under the right arm and over the left shoulder. On their feet are the high-heeled tamancos (soles with toe caps), on their heads are poised enormous bilhas, of beautiful form and colour, full of water, which is thus transported to their homes from the often distant and always infrequent well, and the customary golden ornaments glitter in their small ears. In their regal carriage, in the bold, darkly flashing eyes, in the fine fashioning of hands and feet, in the strong white teeth that gleam in such contrast to swarthy skins, it is easy to recognise the daughters of the Moor. A peasant in velvet jacket and with sombrero shading a face hard-featured and side-whiskered as that of any Irishman (whose ethnological cousin he is indeed) ambles along on his shaggy pony, and Masaniello-like figures in Phrygian caps of black or red, short white linen breeches and scarlet woollen sashes, come and go, walking in front of teams of oxen

harnessed to clumsy wagons and guiding them by the movement of long wands which I never see put to harsher use. Long before they creep into sight these wagons give notice of their approach by the screaming plaint which, issuing from uncoiled wheels innocent of spokes and formed of solid discs of wood, is intended to keep that timid personage, the devil, at a respectful distance. A few miles further east in the neighbourhood of Coimbra, when rain comes on, the peasants may still be seen protecting themselves with curious cloaks of what is literally thatch, but these are not common here. With a comical feeling that is half guilt and half elation, I notice the gaze of surprise rest on my solitary self. These people know quite as well as I do that I am outraging the proprieties, but one and all pass with a courteous salutation 'Boas tardes, Minha Senhora' ('Good afternoon, my lady'), and all look healthy and well fed, albeit on a wage of 7*d.* to 1*s.* 1*d.* a day. If men, as well as maids, lead a life that knoweth not the smallest amenities of an English labourer's existence, their wants are few. If the hours of work be long, the toil demanded is not too strenuous, while opportunity for distraction and social intercourse is never lacking. Church holidays, with their finale of merry-making, are too numerous to be completely catalogued, and I will only name one or two of these festas, each of which has its appropriate procession. There is that of SS. Peter and Paul, at Buarcos, the village of fishermen and fisher wives, who parade a boat in the midst of the cortège. Then the Vigil of the Fifth Sunday in Lent, when, the procession taking place at night, Chinese lanterns of every fantastic form are swung by priests and worshippers alike. There is Good Friday, when, though this day can hardly come under the head of a festa, the sun and moon walk abroad among saints and prophets, and wooden clappers are substituted for the music prohibited by the Church. Religious duties performed, the rest of the day is devoted to amusement, and here dancing fills the principal rôle. The young people meet in each other's houses, or outside in the open spaces, but never in the taverns. Modern dances, such as the polka, are greatly in vogue. Waltzes (which can boast a longer pedigree than is generally supposed) are also much in favour, alternating with quaint country measures that necessitate much bending and swaying of the figure and much display of ankle. The guitar and the 'viola'—a variety of the former—supply the music, which is marked by the strange haunting monotony and minor cadences that affect the hearer so powerfully in the song of the people. Cattle-fairs are also looked forward

to as opportunity for friendly meeting and the exchange of local gossip. The most important business there transacted is the buying and selling of oxen, and great is the ceremony preliminary to a purchase. First comes the ordinary examination of every part but the mouth, after which the price is agreed upon. Then only the mouth of the beast is interviewed. Should his tongue prove to be white, a 'pinto,' or 2*s.*, is struck off the price; should a tooth be found to be broken, a 'moeda' (about 21*s.*) is deducted. The clenching of the bargain is done by the purchaser spitting into the mouth of the animal, and this is final. The 'alborque' that has yet to follow is more of a complimentary than of a business nature. Being interpreted, it means 'drinks all round,' everyone who has assisted in the performance sharing in the conviviality. First the buyer and then the seller pays for the 'great bell,' as the litre of wine, on these occasions only, is called, and all drink from the same cup. As wine at the present day costs no more than 2½*d.* the litre, the 'great bell' does not unduly swell the price of the oxen, which for a fine pair runs to as much as 30*l.* or 40*l.* It is pleasant to know that even for a sum as considerable as this the most perfect reliance on the honesty of the purchaser is felt. Should he by any chance have come to market unprovided with money, his word, though he be a complete stranger, is sufficient guarantee and home he goes guiding his new acquisition by the movement, not by the touch, of his slender wand. Next fair day he never fails to return for the settling up.

Despite his fondness for festas and processions, the Portuguese peasant cannot be exactly described as religious. But superstitious he most undoubtedly is. Great is his dread of the evil eye, which he does his best to counteract by the hanging of ram's horns over his windmill and his lintel, on the door of the oven in which he bakes his bread, and in close proximity to his clock in order to mount guard over hands and pendulum; and he has no doubt at all as to the power of witches, whether to bring back the errant affections of his sweetheart, to reveal the whereabouts of his lost property, to conduct his lawsuit to a desirable conclusion, or to foretell the winning number of a lottery. Every town and village has its witch, who contrives somehow to evade the hand of the law—whether with or without the connivance of the policeman, who stands as much in awe of the ladies of the broomstick as any other of his class—let us not ask too closely. Vows and pilgrimages are common. It is a frequent plea from the beggar at your door that he, too, has vowed a pilgrimage, and lacks the means to perform it,

while another pretext for petition is found in the desire to contribute towards one of the festas of which mention has been made above.

Two days ago, as I paced the terrace in the late afternoon, the sound of a church bell, nine times tolled, broke the stillness. I was informed that it rang as an appeal for prayers on behalf of a peasant woman in labour, and that in order, according to popular belief, to be efficacious the cord was pulled by a young maiden named Maria. Yesterday, in the hour before dawn, the poor creature for whom our pity was thus entreated died. She lived in the tiny house across the way, and at sundown a little procession came to take the body to the cemetery. The cortège consisted of the priest and his acolytes, a guild of some sort in full black cloaks faced with scarlet, and last, not least, the coffin athwart a stout donkey. But no women were of the party. They had collected inside the hovel, from which there presently arose a pandemonium of shrieks and wailing. Not the relatives, these that raised the outcry, but friends and neighbours who conscientiously discharged a social duty. I did not see, but I afterwards heard how they seized the corpse, disputing possession with the undertaker's men, and refusing, also in accordance with long-established usage, to suffer it to be placed in the shell. Etiquette at last satisfied, the officials were allowed to do their duty and the procession got under way. It was then I saw the posse of females, as with outflung arms and every other dramatic expression of inconsolable affliction they stood without the door, custom forbidding their further escort, and sent ear-piercing yells after the corpse until a merciful turn of the road hid the coffin and its escort from their view.

Not many miles from here on the south side of the River Mondego, when a death has taken place and until the mourning comes home from dressmaker and tailor, the relatives of the deceased are only seen abroad enveloped, the men in voluminous black cloaks and hoods that almost entirely conceal the face, the women in black shawls worn so that nought but the eyes and the tip of the nose are visible. In still more remote parts it is even yet the custom for the men of the family to let the hair of head and face grow unclipped until the period of mourning be past, and less than thirty years ago it was no unusual thing when making a visit of condolence (which, by the way, had and still has to be paid before the funeral, and this takes place within twenty-four hours of death), to find the women squatting on the floor around the coffin, or rather the corpse, which lay in state prepared to receive visits and clad

as in life, apparently! The handsome lace-trimmed robe that would strike the beholder with envy and admiration was in most cases but a sort of façade, the front parts only of skirt and bodice being utilised. The women, draped in garments of woe, their heads and shoulders wrapped in black shawls, would utter veritable howls as they rocked to and fro. No relatives, male or female, followed the body to the grave in those days, the theory being that members of the family were too much overcome with grief to be capable of any exertion. On the same principle, friends would hasten to send in offerings of ready cooked food, in order to leave the bereaved to their legitimate business of lamentation.

And indeed I have no doubt that their grief was very real, for family affection is one of the most charming traits of the amiable Portuguese character. Superfluous relatives are cared for as a matter of course, and he who emigrates, hoping to pick up gold and silver in the Brazils or Africa, never fails to send a share of the harvest to the old folks at home. And while the Portuguese have nought but loving solicitude for their own kin, the stranger may go her way in unprotected solitude, throughout the length and breadth of the land, disapproved may be, but sure to meet with kindness and friendly helpfulness incredible. It is significant that though during the course of my hour's walk I do not come across a single representative of the leisured classes, neither do I encounter one of the genus tramp or beggar.

Presently I am reminded by finding myself close to a friend's house that I owe a call of congratulation, and I determine to discharge my debt then and there. Donna Fulana is at home. We all, by the by, from the moment of introduction, call each other by our Christian names alone (with the addition of 'Senhora Donna,' or occasionally, by way of variety, an 'Excellency'), which has its awkward side, as you can never tell whether the Donna Amelia alluded to be the stately granddame of seventy or her granddaughter of seventeen, while it is equally possible that reference may be intended to the 'Queen,' the milliner, or the washerwoman. But this in parenthesis.

Donna Fulana being at home, there ensues a great unshuttering of the state apartment—the Sala de Visita—and I take my seat as modesty requires on one of the chairs that range themselves with such symmetric precision round the centre table. Presently, however, from some homelier room—where, if it be winter, the family will have gathered round the *brazero* and its

heap of ash and ember—my hostess bustles in, and, after much insistence on her part, and corresponding deprecation on my own, I am forced to move to the place of honour, the thing placed square and uncompromising against the wall, which she calls a sofa, but which *I* call a cane settee. And then I turn to the daughter of the house, whose engagement has been recently announced. A fine, handsome girl this, I think, as I make my pretty speeches, but o'er young to marry yet. 'Yes,' sighs the mother, 'I have told the young people they must wait another year or so. I do not approve of early marriages, and I shall not permit the wedding till Candida is seventeen.' The bride to be had celebrated her fourteenth birthday the week before the proposal came. Judging by the mutinous expression of Candida's—I beg her pardon, of Senhora Donna Candida's—beautiful dark eyes, she has no intention of waiting two more years; but when, on my return to the house in which I am a visitor, I express my astonishment and almost indignation, I find that such early marriage, far from being an exception, is quite in the natural order of things Portuguese. Donna Felismena was a friend and contemporary of my aunt. One fine day—she was then fifteen and unpromised, as far as she knew—to her came her mother, bidding her prepare without delay to go to church, 'for it is necessary that you make confession.' At the altar her bridegroom awaited her, and the knot was tied without further ado. Her family were 'Fidalgos,' or long-pedigreed aristocrats. So, too, was that of a certain Donna Amelia Albuerque, whom my aunt also knew. She also, at the ripe age of fifteen, willingly engaged herself to a man whom she had never seen, the young folks meeting for the first time as she stepped from the boat that took her up the river to Coimbra, and from which she walked direct to church. It comes as a surprise to learn that both these marriages turned out well. Near Coimbra, in the Quinta das Lagrimas, once the home of the ill-fated Inez de Castro, whose blood is said to still stain the threshold, there lived, and not so very long ago, yet another girl friend of my aunt's who took her husband without any previous acquaintance. She not only acted of her own free will, but from punctilious courtesy (much admired at the time, I am told—I fear *I* should have found a different name for it) declined to receive his portrait beforehand 'as he had had the delicacy not to ask for hers.' My aunt's sister-in-law was married under similar conditions; indeed, such instances might have been multiplied a generation back. But now girls, even in Portugal, are

growing sadly emancipated and independent, and though God knows it is little enough they ever see of their *fiancés*, they do at least insist on an introduction!

How these people carry on their love-making is to me a mystery. The language of eye and fan and kerchief, a lingering under a balcony, or oft-repeated passing before a window, an occasional rencontre at the Casino or on the promenade, under the eye of all society—such is what passes for acquaintance adequate for marriage, while even after engagement the betrothed are never permitted a moment of unsupervised bliss.

It might be thought that private entertainments would afford opportunity for lads and lasses to form some opinion of each other's characters. Far from it. With all that the Portuguese has inherited from the East, ostentatious hospitality is not among it. But if they cannot be said to keep open house, they are an extraordinarily kind folk, and several times it has been my good fortune to be included in a family festivity. What banquets graced the occasions! One celebrated the birthday of the only child of the house. It began at 6 P.M. (we assembled at four, by the way, and talked spasmodically of I should be puzzled to say what for the two preliminary hours), and some twelve courses appeared at long intervals, fish, as in Spain, making its bow between two meats, when I had long given up expectation of its coming. Twenty-four dishes of sweets crowned the feast, jellies, pastries, creams, and fruit galore, all under the general heading of dessert, being attacked simultaneously, besides huge quantities of the curious sweetmeats peculiar to the Peninsula, which are popped into the mouth at all and any stages of the meal, with no intermediary except fingers between dish and mouth. These sweetmeats are mostly of appalling richness, being composed of yolk of egg just sufficiently baked to congeal outside into the desired form, but all soft and semi-liquid within, sweet to nauseousness, and usually destitute of any flavour but that antiquity may supply. Up to the moment of dessert we had drunk the light wine of the country, but now champagne made its appearance, and with it toasts begin. Twenty-two of them, as I am a living woman, followed by twenty-two solemn liftings of glasses and twenty-two returnings of ceremonial thanks. At last, somewhere about 9 P.M., we were free to leave the room as we entered it, in a mob that knew not precedence, or even much distinction of sex. We came as we pleased, we sat as we pleased, we went as we pleased, and, as at table, the men—they were all

in frock-coats, by-the-way—soon drifted together to talk wine and politics over the coffee, the cigarettes, and the toothpicks. Meanwhile we women fell back on scandal, dressmakers, and servants, to the same accompaniment, minus the cigarettes. They are magnificent housekeepers, these ladies in the high dark gowns and superb diamonds, and the work of their needles strikes me with ever fresh amazement. The sexes did not mix—it is true that I, as the stranger, was placed at table between my host and a man who, though cunning in languages, seemed to regard my expectation of being entertained as unwarrantable presumption on the part of mere woman, while the other ladies preserved a discreet silence—the sexes did not mix till the lotto-tables were brought out, and the usual resource of home gatherings began. It was then we roused up, and animation reigned. With counters at $\frac{1}{4}d.$ a dozen, it was quite possible to win as much as $3d.$ in the course of a game, so, grey-haired as many of us and millionaires as some of us were (in pounds sterling, *bien entendu*, not merely in reis, which is a simple matter even to the humblest tourist in this quaintly financed country, where a day's hotel bill runs easily into tens of thousands), the scene soon became suggestive of Bedlam let loose. We screamed, we shouted with excitement, each trying generally to out-yell his neighbours. We clasped our hands in suspense, we wrung them in despair when we lost, we flung out our arms in triumph when we won, or worked them like the sails of a windmill in our frenzies of delight!

And so passed a couple of hours. It was 11.30 when the footmen entered with huge trays of green tea, of cake, and of what, by courtesy, is called buttered toast, and the tables were stripped of cards and counters to support the good cheer. At midnight carriages were announced (your true Portuguese will never walk a step, even into the next street, if, not owning a carriage, he can by any possibility beg, borrow, or—a last, a very last, resource—hire one), and we separated, I to the last reiterating thanks for the real honour that had been done me by welcome into what is a man's castle in much more literal sense in Portugal than in England.

If fair Lusitania be in many ways an anachronism, if her government be a crying scandal, the officialdom that sucks her blood be a mass of corruption from highest to lowest, nowhere is more amazing generosity, more delicate courtesy, more spontaneous kindness to be found than among the individual Portuguese.

CONSTANCE LEIGH CLARE.

*ROME, BEFORE THE BATTLE OF MENTANA,
NOVEMBER 3, 1867.*

In order to understand the political situation in Italy exactly forty years ago, it is necessary to bear in mind that, with the exception of the Papal territory, Italy had become one nation. The Government of King Victor Emmanuel had been removed from Turin to Florence. It was perfectly understood throughout the Peninsula that Rome was the real objective. French troops had been withdrawn, and Garibaldi thought that his opportunity had come for those tactics which had been so successful before, in forcing the hand of the Italian Government. In the month of September, 1867, many of his old victorious friends of the Sicilian and Neapolitan campaigns were rallying round him for the accomplishment of the great object of his life, the proclamation of Rome as the capital of a united Italy. The Pope could only rely on a small force of his own regular troops raised in the 'States of the Church,' and (of far greater military value) enthusiastic Zouaves who came to his aid, though in limited numbers, from all parts of the world—mainly, I should say, French, Dutch, and Canadians. General Kanzler, a Bavarian, commanded the Papal forces.

On the other hand, equally zealous patriots, generally very youthful but stiffened by a few foreigners, and soldiers in the Italian army who had obtained leave of absence from their regiments for a few weeks, were now collecting on the frontier. There were but five or six thousand men on either side. But behind the Papal interest there loomed the great power of France, and behind that of the Garibaldians the regular forces of Italy. It was by no means certain that Napoleon would intervene. He had but lately fought by the side of Victor Emmanuel at Magenta and Solferino, adding Venetia to the Italian territory. There was a strong feeling throughout France, counterbalanced, however, by the Ultramontanist party, in favour of Italian unity. Would Napoleon venture to throw his sword into the scale of Pius IX., though somewhat pledged to do so? Would Victor Emmanuel be forced to throw his into the opposite scale owing to the passionate cry of his subjects?

General Garibaldi, however, had encouraged his followers too far to retreat now from the task he had determined at some time to accomplish. After the 'Peace Congress' at Geneva, and the 'progress' of Garibaldi through Florence on September 17, no doubt could possibly remain of his intentions. On grounds of expediency the Ratazzi Ministry took the General prisoner at Sinalunga, a small frontier town of Tuscany; but the feeling of the country was plainly visible at Pistoja, Alessandria (where he remained a prisoner a short time), and especially at Genoa, where he was conducted to the vessel which was to take him to his own home at Caprera.

At this distance of time, this brief preface seems to me almost necessary to make intelligible names and details of events which I purpose to give of what occurred in Rome during October and the early days of November, 1867, the days and dates coinciding with those of this year. Anyone at all acquainted with the difficulty of obtaining accurate information in a city during a siege, and under martial law, will forgive and even anticipate some mistakes, but if the following narrative possesses any interest or value, it does so owing to my having kept a diary posted up every night throughout those weeks, which I supplemented with any morsels of information I thought I could trust reaching me from outside the walls of Rome. These latter items, which will be obvious to the reader, I incorporated in my journal a day or two afterwards. I wonder whether there is any other Englishman's journal extant recording those Roman days!

It was not my first visit to Rome, but I had just been appointed assistant-chaplain at the English Church, then outside the Porta del Popolo. Neither the senior nor the American chaplain was to arrive till a later date. On October 1, I reached Florence.

The city was just calming down after the excitement and gentle rioting of the last days in September; and 'Death to Ratazzi!' was a prevalent cry, since he had ventured to arrest the hopes of United Italy.

That all was not quiet was but too visible as regiment after regiment at early dawn passed along under the window of my hotel, all bound for the frontier, not necessarily to fight, but at least to await events. On the evening of the 3rd, I took my ticket for Rome. Only one other gentleman was in the compartment with me, and with the sole interruption of having our passports examined by Italian officials at Perugia, nothing unusual occurred. At some very early hour in the morning the Papal Douaniers took

our passports, to be returned to us in Rome, but my companion had disappeared, *not* I think at any station. I noticed this with some surprise, and subsequent events caused me to suppose that some spy at Florence had taken note of the compartment into which he had entered.

Late on Saturday night, October 5, after I had retired to my bedroom in the Hôtel d'Angleterre, I received there a visit from two of the police, presenting me with a peremptory order to appear at the police court at Monte Citorio at ten o'clock the following morning. Immediately, the same night, I sent a note inclosing this summons to Mr. Severn, our Consul, pointing out the inconvenience which would arise were I detained any length of time. He replied that he would communicate with the police, and did not consider that it would be necessary for me to appear in court until after the morning service at eleven o'clock, regretting that his own infirmities would not allow him to accompany me. Mr. Hooker, the well-known American banker, kindly went with me at one o'clock. The court was crowded with persons apparently summoned like myself, and I learnt from others that hundreds were being expelled that day. Mr. Hooker and I were long kept waiting. At last they professed to identify me, would listen to no explanation or reasoning, told me angrily that I must at once quit the Papal territory, and kindly gave me the choice of going to Naples or Florence. On my reply that I had no intention whatever of leaving Rome, I received back my passport, on one leaf of which I can still read the following interesting entry, as nearly as I can decipher it, stamped with the Tiara and Crosskeys:

2132. Gratis.
Roma li 6 8br. 1867.
Visto per Firenze.
Valido a partire gior.
Anzi ore 24.
Pel Capo d' Ufficio.
Ginardo.

I made my bow, but requested an interview with Monsignore (afterwards Cardinal) Randi, whose position corresponded somewhat to our home minister. Again I had to wait long in an antechamber before being ushered into the Monsignore's presence. On Mr. Hooker vouching for my being the English chaplain and innocent of any offence against the Papal Government, Monsignore Randi politely said he presumed that it was an 'equivoco'—a mistake, and would cancel my *visée* to depart abruptly within

twenty-four hours. Within an hour or so two of his private servants, in their best Sunday livery, called at the hotel, returning to me my passport with the evil page scored through. This is perhaps scarcely worth recording, except as illustrating the nervous excitement of the moment. I may, however, complete this entry by adding that on the return to Rome from Castel Fusano of Mr. Odo Russell (better remembered now first as Lord Odo Russell, and then as Lord Ampthill), I asked him to endeavour to get to the bottom of this disconcerting mistake, as a matter of mere curiosity. He did so with some insistence, but never could learn more than that it was an unfortunate 'equivoco.' My own belief is that I lost my lunch that Sunday through my travelling companion from Florence.

On Monday, October 7, I succeeded in finding an apartment to suit me of three rooms in No. 136 Via Felice. It chanced that my landlord was a sergeant in the Papal Gendarmes of the name of Ajani, who subsequently afforded me much information. His Juno-like wife and daughter also kept me supplied with subterranean news. This day I read the greater part of the Burial Service in a little chapel at the Protestant cemetery for the father of General King, the American minister to the court of Pius IX. His body was to be removed to the United States. Besides the members of his family I there met Mr. Cushman, the American Consul, with whom I became intimate, as also with his charming mother, still remembered as having been a fine actress in America, and also his warm-hearted wife.

There was some skirmishing on this and the following days, which was at first reported to be favourable to the Pontifical troops. My landlord told me, however, that they were largely outnumbered, and Rome itself was beginning to wear an ominous aspect. By the middle of the week I met wounded soldiers and police. The anxious question now was, would there be a rising within Rome itself? On Thursday, October 10, 110 prisoners were brought into the city. It was quickly understood that fighting on Sunday, the 13th, had been unfavourable. Every man the Government dared to send was despatched to the front, and Rome was left comparatively ungarrisoned. On Monday, October 14, I heard from two exclusively Roman sources that a revolution would take place within the week. Four vans full of wounded Zouaves came in, and the streets at mid-day were filled with dangerous-looking crowds.

After dark scarcely a person was to be met even in such busy thoroughfares as the Corso and Condotti. Gendarmes were alone to be seen—pickets patrolling with rifles and fixed bayonets. Against whom the wrath of the populace would first be directed was obvious, for more than once during the day I heard even Liberals exclaim in a tone of pity words to this effect, 'The poor priests, ah! What a fearful time it will be for them.' The Jesuits especially, it was said, would receive a dire retribution now long laid up in store. As far as I could judge there was no hostility felt towards the Pope personally, or to the Church in its purely religious aspect, but to the system of espionage and frequent arbitrary arrests which had grown up under clerical rule. I had many proofs of this.

On Tuesday, the 15th, I called on three Scotch ladies, who lived in their villa outside the walls on Monte Paroli, who had received a requisition on their carriage horses. They were busy making Union Jacks.

The morning of Wednesday, the 16th, I was awakened while it was still dark by the clatter of cavalry galloping up the street, and, listening by my open window, I thought I heard rifle reports at a distance, but have been unable to confirm this, though shots may have been fired, as I subsequently repeatedly found that firing had taken place in a street, while from the configuration of the ground and massiveness and height of the Roman houses almost the very next street remained ignorant of the fact. During this and the following days, perhaps the most disagreeable thing of all was the extreme difficulty of ascertaining the truth, as concerning either what was taking place in Rome, or out of it. Everyone had his own story to tell, and out of the multitude of rumours one had to search for the one precious grain of truth.

It was on this day that the Garibaldini stopped the night train at Orta, and all mere travellers were politely informed that they might continue their journeys to Ancona or Florence, or elsewhere, whilst even Pontifical officials were simply told that they must find their way back to Rome as best they might. The engine was reversed, and the Garibaldians utilised the train back as far as Corese. This information I received from one of those who succeeded in trudging back two days afterwards. Thursday, the 17th, brought the news that the railway had been broken by the Garibaldians at Ceprano on the Neapolitan line, and there was a mistaken rumour that Garibaldi himself was in the north at Viterbo.

Friday, October 18.—Called on Mr. Severn, and learnt that the

insurrection had assumed very grave proportions, apparent from the fact that not only were Romans of the lower class joining the movement, but that a son of the exiled Prince Piombino and two of the young Cesarini Princes had thrown themselves into the cause. He also said that several of the Roman Princes had begged for protection, if necessary, and that just before I called one of the brothers of the ex-king of Naples with his wife had asked for asylum at the Palazzo Poli in case of need. The Consul, however, made me promise to come to tea with about twenty nuns who claim protection under the British flag, and may any day avail themselves of it.

The Garibaldians received a serious check at Nerola, not far from Corese, about eighteen miles north of Rome. Menotti Garibaldi was said to be in command. The Zouaves amounted to barely 1,000, while Menotti had three or four times that number. They literally surrounded the Pontifical troops, yet shrank from approaching to close quarters, and lost a great number of prisoners. The Zouaves under the brave de Charette, who afterwards distinguished himself in the Franco-German War, had fifty-two killed and wounded in this engagement. Mr. Cushman was present, and received a slight wound. In an audience given to Professor Levi, of London University, this day, the Pope expressed the greatest confidence as to the ultimate result.

Saturday, 19th.—Forty wounded [Zouaves and many prisoners were brought in this morning from Nerola. There are reports throughout the city that a general rising will take place to-night or to-morrow. The French Ambassador in an audience at the Vatican gave the Pope a positive assurance that the Emperor would send aid at once.

Sunday, 20th.—Great agitation. The chief objects of value were removed from many of the churches, jewels and works of art hidden. Much suspense and fear was manifest, and private houses were early closed, and in some cases barricaded from within.

Monday, 21st.—It was currently expected that the Italian troops would march on Rome, and that in fact a race was taking place between these by land and the French by sea.

The railway to Leghorn was broken, and the Government gave orders that no tickets should be issued on the three lines beyond Civita Vecchia, Corese, and Frosinone. At Florence there was great excitement, and the Ratazzi ministry resigned.

Tuesday, 22nd.—Barricades were being hastily constructed

at the various city gates, and shops were ordered to be shut. The Pope went out of the Porta del Popolo for a drive in the Borghese gardens. This was construed into 'blessing the barricade' by his subjects, and did him no good. One man said to me, 'It is not for priests to bless barricades.' Another, 'Holy Father wants to make a puppet show of himself.' As I happened to be standing at the gate when he passed through, I contradicted his having driven out for the purpose of blessing these earthworks. The carriage passed at a rapid trot, and I scarcely think that he saw the preparations at all. For personal popularity it would have been well had he remained at home. An eventful day it proved. Treachery, accident, and bad management united to thwart the projects of the revolutionary party. One of their principal leaders betrayed the whole at the last moment—arms which were to have been distributed were seized by the Government. Considerable numbers of men passing singly during the afternoon through the Porta San Paolo gave one after another, when challenged as to their destination, the same locality, thereby of course arousing suspicion, and ending in all being surrounded.

I myself went early to the Consulate for advice or authority to erect the Union Jack over the English Church outside the walls. Mr. Severn sent me to Monsignore Randi, he to another minister at the Quirinal, and he bade me seek Cardinal Antonelli. I then returned to Mr. Severn to obtain at least some official paper which I might place in the hands of the caretaker at the chapel, to show that it was English property should Garibaldians assault or occupy it. With this I went to our chapel, where I saw Pius IX. as mentioned above. I stripped the altar, and brought away all things of value to my lodging. I also endeavoured to see the well-known Jesuit astronomer, Father Secchi, a member of the Royal Society of London, at the Observatory within the Collegio Romano, but every door was barred, and no response made to my importunate knocking. I found Mr. Cushman at his house, and of like mind as myself, that the American chapel, which adjoined ours, might receive respect, were an assault to be made on the Porta del Popolo, if the American flag were hoisted. He therefore accompanied me to Cardinal Antonelli's apartments in the Vatican. We were at once admitted, and proffered our request. Never have I been refused a thing so sweetly. He assured us that there was no danger, and that to erect national flags at such a moment would betray a sense of insecurity—that if Italian troops came it would

be another matter—that the Garibaldians respected nothing—that the Papal forces could certainly hold the city for two days. He then jumped up from the sofa on which he had placed me, and brought me back a telegram from the Emperor of the French, which he had only just received, to the effect that troops would be despatched that night from Toulon. This was indeed news. The Cardinal pointed out that their arrival was a mere question of a day or two at the utmost. He stated that the Italians had not yet crossed the frontier—that Garibaldi was reported to be between Subiaco and Tivoli, and spoke strongly of the Italian bad faith in allowing the Garibaldians to invade Papal territory. We talked also about the fight at Nerola, where Mr. Cushman had been wounded, and about the late American War, in which he had fought. Then, turning to me, he asked questions about the Irish and the Fenians. For nearly an hour (for he pressed us to remain, as if he had nothing to think of) we sat side by side, he calling me generally 'Mon cher,' and often laying his hand on my arm. It was now past 8 P.M. and we could see that he was very averse to the display of our respective flags, though his wish was conveyed to us in terms of extreme politeness. Cushman and I drove back together, and I persuaded him to come and dine with me. About a quarter of an hour after leaving the Cardinal, close to where we had passed, a portion of the S. Ristori barracks near the Vatican were blown up, causing a tremendous explosion. About forty Zouaves were instantly killed, or died under the ruins that night. Subsequently it was discovered that many of the barracks and guard-houses were mined, and that the intention had been to blow them up simultaneously. Mr. Cushman's house was in the Via Gregoriana, not more than two or three hundred yards from my apartment, but as we heard firing and bomb explosions, he asked me for a revolver as he did not know whom he might meet, even in that short distance. As it happened, a picket did surround him with a ring of bayonets before he had gone many yards. He explained who he was, and with a warning of the extreme danger of being abroad such a night, and an inquiry if he was armed, continued their patrol.

Bombs and rifle-firing were heard at one point or other almost all night. The gates of S. Giovanni Laterano and of S. Paolo were taken and retaken. A mob had collected at nightfall, and there was fighting on the Capitol. Many believed that Garibaldi himself had contrived to enter the city, but, as a matter of fact,

both this rumour and the information which Antonelli had received that he was near Tivoli were wrong. He was at Florence, and in the evening addressed an immense crowd in the Piazza di Santa Maria Novella, having escaped from Caprera the day before.

Wednesday, 23rd.—I was surprised to find the Porta del Popolo open for foot passengers, though the barricade had been much strengthened with three tiers of barrels filled with sand and a ditch in front. I walked out with young Macdonald, the sculptor, as far as the Ponte Molle, which was neither mined nor guarded.

Having failed yesterday to obtain access into the Collegio Romano, I tried again, and after much trouble succeeded in seeing Father Secchi, to whom I was anxious to offer any little assistance in my power, in the event of the revolution being successful.

I had an interesting half-hour with him. He did not anticipate anything in the shape of a massacre, though fully recognising danger to buildings, and even life. In the event of great peril, he said he would gratefully accept the offer of my spare bedroom, and took the number of my house in the Via Felice. Reports of some fighting in the streets reached me in the afternoon, but a very heavy storm helped to keep things quiet.

Thursday, 24th.—‘L’Italie’ announces that, through representations of the Italian Government, the French troops had received counter orders on the eve of their embarkment at Toulon. I found not only that the gates were all closed, but that any approach to them was impossible. The Piazza del Popolo was forbidden ground, as also the Pincian.

A sharp engagement was taking place near the Ponte Molle and the Aquacetosa. Seventy Garibaldini under two Sardinian brothers, Counts Cairoli, descended the Tiber in boats, landed, and were soon engaged with a mixed body of Papal troops hastily gathered together. So small a body of Garibaldians, though they fought with extraordinary courage, were overwhelmed. One of the Cairolis was killed, and the other wounded. The firing was very distinct, as also the reports of cannon on the other side of the city. I tried to enter the gardens of the Villa Medici, but was not allowed. The street walls were placarded with an order by General Zappi, commanding the second division, that on the report of five guns being heard from S. Angelo all citizens were to retire immediately to their houses. The wildest canards were spread throughout the day—that not only Garibaldi, but also the old President of the Roman Republic in 1848, Mazzini, had found their

way into Rome, that an Italian army was close at hand, and that Pius IX. had fled during the preceding night. The general impression was that there would be a fearful rising to-night. At five o'clock I met the Duchess of Sermoneta, who told me that she had come direct from having an audience with his Holiness, who had been urged to invite the regular Italian troops to enter as a secure protection against revolutionary excesses, but that he would not hear of it. Papal troops came in, recalled from the States, while the Antibes Legion on the other hand was sent to Civita Vecchia. The Zouaves look thoroughly knocked up, and are said to have suffered in this morning's engagement on Monte Paroli. Many explosions were heard after dark, one especially loud at nine, and another at half-past ten was unpleasantly near to me. At this time the streets were absolutely deserted, whilst between 5 and 6 P.M. enormous crowds filled them. The appearance and then total disappearance of these thousands seemed full of evil omen.

Friday, 25th.—The night had passed without any general rising. The city was formally put in a state of siege, but I still found the Porta del Popolo open, so early visited the scene of yesterday's engagement and paid a visit to my three Scotch lady friends in their villa on Monte Paroli. They told me that there had been fighting both on Wednesday and the day before (Thursday) in their vineyards, and around a big pine-tree in their grounds—not very pleasant for three old ladies. Returning from this call, I found troops hurrying into the Piazza, and had I been one minute later should have been refused ingress. At midday there was severe fighting at a house in the Piazza di S. Calisto in the Trastevere. Some thirty Garibaldian sympathisers occupied the rooms and defended the house for some hours against Zouaves and gendarmes, who at last carried it and put everyone to the sword. The house belonged to relatives of my landlord Ajani.

A sadder story yet. Owing to some panic an osteria in the Borgo was entered by Zouaves, and several innocent men, women, and children were killed.

The evening was again disturbed by three tremendous explosions at 9.15.

Saturday, 26th.—Ingress and egress at any of the city gates absolutely forbidden. As usual, all sorts of contradictory news. In the evening, however, it was known that an important engagement had taken place at Monte Rotondo, about fourteen miles due

north of Rome, and that the Papal forces were defeated, had lost three guns, one other spiked, and nearly 300 men had been killed, wounded, or taken prisoners.

Sunday, 27th.—I held two services in my own apartment, having advised my friends to come singly and not to attract attention, as any *four* people had been warned not to collect together in the streets under pain of arrest.

The Zouaves who had escaped from the field of Monte Rotondo came in, sadly thinned, and so worn out that they dropped down out of the ranks. These men had been on constant duty, marching and counter-marching, for seventeen days consecutively.

We were of course confined within the city walls, but I walked with Mr. Hooker to S. Giovanni, and noticed the sacks piled on the city walls, loopholes, and other signs of defence. Ajani at Civita Vecchia could learn nothing of the French coming, but on returning to the railway station here, a colonel told him that they had undoubtedly started from Toulon.

Four pieces of artillery passed under my windows after dark. I wonder whether we shall wake up under a Pope or a dictator—an emperor or a king! Had Italy acted swiftly and boldly there was no Papal force to stay her soldiers from being in Rome this night.

Monday, 28th.—The vanguard of the Garibaldini advanced to the Ponte Salara, only three miles from the walls. We heard firing from that quarter nearly all day. The Papal forces are now all concentrated in or around Rome, 700 coming in from Velletri at 7 P.M. Both French and Italian troops are almost hourly expected in our ignorance of what is really going on outside, and the greatest excitement is felt as to what the result will be. I walked round to two or three of the gates, which were blocked up and strongly guarded. The Capitol was transformed into a camp. It was well to be in one's house at an early hour. From nervousness, or not having their challenge instantly answered, gendarmes frequently fired on unoffending citizens, about fifteen being killed in this way. I myself was returning up the hill from the Piazza Barberini to my lodgings when, owing to an occasional rifle-ball whizzing by, I found it expedient to reach the house by darting from doorstep to doorstep. Also at night, owing to opening my window and looking at a picket patrolling beneath, they stopped, faced me, and I heard the click of their triggers, but, seeing no hostile action on my part, marched on.

This was felt to be a night of the utmost anxiety all over Rome.

As a matter of fact the French fleet with 9,000 (?) men hove in sight of Civita Vecchia late this evening.

Tuesday, 29th.—Fighting continued at the Ponte Salara, and finally this beautiful bridge was blown up to stop the Garibaldini advance. Also fighting on the Capitol, and other bridges broken. The French began to disembark, and General Dumont arrived very quietly in Rome. Shots were still being fired in the streets.

Wednesday, 30th.—A young English Zouave friend came and lunched with me. He told me that he had been eighteen days without taking off his boots. At 3 P.M. the French vanguard, 2,200 strong, entered the city. There were large crowds in the streets leading to the station: an awful silence prevailed, and never shall I forget the aspect of the masses that evening. Despair was depicted in every face. One man whispered to me, 'We must remain tranquil—it is a necessity!' They *would* not believe in the French occupation, and now that it was really a fact they saw that the day was lost, their opportunity over, their submission a certainty, their fetters riveted anew.

I wandered through many of the streets at night. They were deserted, but each café was crowded to excess, and the Corso was full of French soldiers. Some little fighting took place in the Borgo, and an attempt was made at 8 P.M. to carry the S. Giovanni Gate; but these were isolated and quite inadequate attempts to carry the city. There were of course large numbers who were hearty supporters of the temporal power of the Popes; others who were red Republicans; but I am convinced that the great majority of Romans are in favour of unity under the Italian monarchy. We must not, however, charge Romans with a want of energy, or cowardice, for we have to remember that 40,000 were either in exile or in prison before this month, and (so I learn from Ajani) 10,000 more had been imprisoned during the month, and all arms had been diligently sought for and confiscated.

Friday, November 1st.—After celebrating the Divine service for All Saints' Day, I visited many of the gates of the city, and called on a few English and American friends. More French entered.

Saturday, 2nd.—Very contradictory rumours as to what the Italian troops were doing, for all means of communication were stopped. It seems, however, that the new ministry under General Menabrea yesterday allowed the army to cross the frontier and occupy Cività Castellana in the north and Frosinone in the south, letting their flag fly *with* that of the Pope. Montalto, on the road

to Leghorn, has been taken by the Garibaldians. I went to the Sistine Chapel at the Vatican, and heard the Pope sing at the funeral mass of a cardinal.

Sunday, 3rd.—At 3 A.M. 3,000 Pontifical troops, under General Kanzler, and about 4,000 French, under Generals de Failly and Dumont, left for Monte Rotondo, which Garibaldi had made his headquarters. Seeing the French occupation, and the decision of the Florence Cabinet not to enter upon 'a fratricidal war,' as they termed it, Garibaldi was in the act of retiring to the mountains, and was expected at Tivoli on Sunday night, when he was unexpectedly confronted, at midday, by the united forces of Papalini and French at Mentana, two miles to the east of Monte Rotondo. His own soldiers fell short of those of the Pope, and here amidst its famed vineyards of old, where Ovid and Seneca had their country villas, the decisive battle of the campaign was fought. The French had orders at first to support General Kanzler, and were not called into action till late in the day. The engagement commenced soon after noon, about a mile in advance of the village, and from extreme right to left each occupied a front of something more than a mile. The ground is broken up into a series of gentle hills, covered for the most part with vine and oliveyards. The Papal troops approached along the high road, and then extended themselves to their left through a brushwood of young oak. Garibaldi directed the operations of his red-shirted volunteers from the platform in front of a farmhouse on rising ground covered with vines, rather to the left of his whole position. The Zouaves slowly made progress, every foot of ground being hotly disputed, and at length were carrying point after point, when between four and five o'clock the tide turned. General Kanzler had no reserves of his own, and he had to call upon the French. In less than an hour the day was decided, mainly by the French outflanking the Garibaldian left. Garibaldi stubbornly retired on Mentana, which the French did not attempt to storm in the dusk of evening. This was the first time that the new French chassepot rifle was used in warfare, and de Failly despatched the telegram to the Emperor, 'Le chassepôt a fait merveilles,' which was long bitterly remembered by Italians. The next morning Mentana was taken with about 1,200 wounded and prisoners. Garibaldi himself at earliest dawn had skilfully and rapidly withdrawn with 4,000 men through Monte Rotondo to the frontier at Corese. But the result of the battle was not generally known in Rome on Sunday evening.

Monday, 4th.—I saw Mr. Cushman just returned from Mentana: complete victory for the Pope. About 6,000 to 8,000 engaged on each side. Great anxiety felt as to the course Italy will take. Ambulances and country carts brought in numbers of wounded during the night and early dawn, and I saw many filled with their ghastly burdens of dead and dying.

There was a great crowd in the Piazza Barberini to see the return of some of the troops. Not a cheer greeted them throughout. There then followed hundreds of prisoners, guarded on either side.

I learnt afterwards that Garibaldi was interned by the authority of the Italian Government on the evening of this day at Orta.

Tuesday, 5th.—I went to Mentana with Captain Wolfe, R.A., who had been sent out from England to report on events. It must be most exciting to be oneself actively engaged fighting in the front ranks. To visit a battlefield afterwards is sickening. The dead, or, at any rate, great numbers of them, had not been buried. Others, too severely wounded to be removed in ambulances, were lying side by side in a chapel where the engagement had taken place. A French officer told off one of his corporals to take us over the field of battle, and explain the flanking movement which decided the fate of the Garibaldians.

Wednesday, 6th.—The remainder of the united Papal and French forces returned to Rome. To-day the populace applauded. Had Garibaldi been the conquering hero, they would have done precisely the same.

E. F. WAYNE.

AT LARGE.¹

BY ARTHUR C. BENSON.

V.

TRAVEL.

THERE are many motives that impel us to travel, to change our sky, as Horace calls it—good motives and bad, selfish and unselfish, noble and ignoble. With some people it is pure restlessness; the tedium of ordinary life weighs on them, and travel, they think, will distract them; people travel for the sake of health, or for business reasons, or to accompany someone else, or because other people travel. And these motives are neither good nor bad, they are simply sufficient. Some people travel to enlarge their minds, or to write a book; and the worst of travelling for such reasons is that it so often implants in the traveller, when he returns, a desperate desire to enlarge other people's minds too. Unhappily, it needs an extraordinary gift of vivid description and a tactful art of selection to make the reflections of one's travels interesting to other people. It is a great misfortune for biographers that there are abundance of people who are stirred, partly by unwonted leisure and partly by awakened interest, to keep a diary only when they are abroad. These extracts from diaries of foreign travel, which generally pour their muddy stream into a biography on the threshold of the hero's manhood, are things to be resolutely skipped. What one desires in a biography is to see the ordinary texture of a man's life, an account of his working days, his normal hours; and to most people the normal current of their lives appears so commonplace and uninteresting that they keep no record of it; while they often keep an elaborate record of their impressions of foreign travel, which are generally superficial and picturesque, and remarkably like the impressions of all other intelligent people. A friend of mine returned the other day from an American tour, and told me that he received a severe rebuke, out of the mouth of a babe, which cured him of expatiating on his experiences.

¹ Copyright, 1907, by Arthur C. Benson, in the United States of America.

He lunched with his brother soon after his return, and was holding forth with a consciousness of brilliant descriptive emphasis, when his eldest nephew, aged eight, towards the end of the meal, laid down his spoon and fork, and said piteously to his mother, 'Mummy, I *must* talk; it does make me so tired to hear Uncle going on like that.' A still more effective rebuke was administered by a clever lady of my acquaintance to a cousin of hers, a young lady who had just returned from India, and was very full of her experiences. The cousin had devoted herself during breakfast to giving a lively description of social life in India, and was preparing to spend the morning in continuing her lecture, when the elder lady slipped out of the room and returned with some sermon-paper, a blotting-book, and a pen. 'Maud,' she said, 'this is too good to be lost: you must write it all down, every word!' The projected manuscript did not come to very much, but the lesson was not thrown away.

Perhaps, for most people, the best results of travel are that they return with a sense of grateful security to the familiar scene: the monotonous current of life has been enlivened, the old relationships have gained a new value, the old gossip is taken up with a comfortable zest; the old rooms are the best, after all, the homely language is better than the outlandish tongue; it is a comfort to have done with squeezing the sponge and cramming the trunk: it is good to be at home.

But to people of more cultivated and intellectual tastes there is an abundance of good reasons for the pursuit of impressions. It is worth a little fatigue to see the spring sun lie softly upon the unfamiliar foliage, to see the delicate tints of the purple-flowered Judas-tree, the bright colours of Southern houses, the old high-shouldered château blinking among its wooded parterres; it is pleasant to see mysterious rites conducted at tabernacled altars, under dark arches, and to smell the 'thick, strong, stupefying incense-smoke'; to see well-known pictures in their native setting, to hear the warm waves of the canal lapping on palace-stairs, with the exquisite moulded cornice overhead. It gives one a strange thrill to stand in places rich with dim associations, to stand by the tombs of heroes and saints, to see the scenes made familiar by art or history, the homes of famous men. Such travel is full of weariness and disappointment. The place one had desired half a lifetime to behold turns out to be much like other places, devoid of inspiration. A tiresome companion casts dreariness as from an inky

cloud upon the mind. Do I not remember visiting the Palatine with a friend bursting with archæological information, who led us from room to room, and identified all by means of a folding plan, to find at the conclusion that he had begun at the wrong end, and that even the central room was not identified correctly, because the number of rooms was even, and not odd?

But, for all that, there come blessed unutterable moments, when the mood and the scene and the companion are all attuned in a soft harmony. Such moments come back to me as I write. I see the mouldering brickwork of a crumbling tomb all overgrown with grasses and snapdragons, far out in the Campagna; or feel the plunge of the boat through the reed-beds of the Anapo, as we slid into the silent pool of blue water in the heart of the marsh, where the sand danced at the bottom, and the springs bubbled up, while a great bittern flew booming away from a reedy pool hard by. Such things are worth paying a heavy price for, because they bring a sort of aerial distance into the mind, they touch the spirit with a hope that the desire for beauty and perfection is not, after all, wholly unrealisable, but that there is a sort of treasure to be found even upon earth, if one diligently goes in search of it.

Of one thing, however, I am quite certain, and that is that travel should not be a feverish garnering of impressions, but a delicious and leisurely plunge into a different atmosphere. It is better to visit few places, and to become at home in each, than to race from place to place, guide-book in hand. A beautiful scene does not yield up its secrets to the eye of the collector. What one wants is not definite impressions but indefinite influences. It is of little use to enter a church, unless one tries to worship there, because the essence of the place is worship, and only through worship can the secret of the shrine be apprehended. It is of little use to survey a landscape, unless one has an overpowering desire to spend the remainder of one's days there; because it is the life of the place, and not the sight of it, in which one desires to have a part. Above all, one must not let one's memories sleep as in a dusty lumber-room of the mind. In a quiet firelit hour one must draw near, and scrutinise them afresh, and ask oneself what remains. As I write, I open the door of my treasury and look round. What comes up before me? I see an opalescent sky, and the great soft blue rollers of a sapphire sea. I am journeying, it seems, in no mortal boat, though it was a commonplace vessel enough at the time, twenty years ago, and singularly destitute of bodily provision.

What is that over the sea's rim, where the tremulous, shifting, blue line of billows shimmers and fluctuates? A long, low promontory, and in the centre, over white clustered houses and masts of shipping, rises a white dome like the shrine of some celestial city. That is Cadiz for me. I daresay the picture is all wrong, and I shall be told that Cadiz has a tower and is full of factory-chimneys; but for me the dome, ghostly white, rises as though moulded out of a single pearl, upon the shifting edges of the haze. Whatever I have seen in my life, that at least is immortal.

Or again the scene shifts, and now I stumble to the deck of another little steamer, very insufficiently habited, in the sharp freshness of the dawn of a spring morning. The waves are different here—not the great steely league-long rollers of the Atlantic, but the sharp azure waves, marching in rhythmic order, of the Mediterranean; what is the land, with grassy downs and folded valleys falling to grey cliffs, upon which the brisk waves whiten and leap? That is Sicily; and the thought of Theocritus, with the shepherd-boy singing light-heartedly upon the headland a song of sweet days and little eager joys, comes into my heart like wine, and brings a sharp touch of tears into the eyes. Theocritus! How little I thought, as I read the ugly brown volume with its yellow paper, in the dusty schoolroom at Eton ten years before, that it was going to mean that to me, sweet as even then, in a moment torn from the noisy tide of schoolboy life, came the pretty echoes of the song into a little fanciful and restless mind! But now, as I saw those deserted limestone crags, that endless sheep-wold, with no sign of a habitation, rising and falling far into the distance, with the fresh sea-breeze upon my cheek—there came upon me that tender sorrow for all the beautiful days that are dead, the days when the shepherds walked together, exulting in youth and warmth and good-fellowship and song, to the village festival, and met the wandering minstrel, with his coat of skin and his kind, ironical smile, who gave them, after their halting lays, a touch of the old true melody from a master's hand. What do all those old and sweet dreams mean for me, the sunlight that breaks on the stream of human souls, flowing all together, alike through dark rocks where the water chafes and thunders, and spreading out into tranquil shining reaches, where the herons stand half-asleep? What does that strange drift of kindred spirits, moving from the unknown to the unknown, mean for me? I only know that it brings into my mind a strange yearning, and a desire of almost unearthly sweetness

for all that is delicate and beautiful and full of charm, together with a sombre pity for the falling mist of tears, the hard discipline of the world, the cries of anguish, as the life lapses from the steep into the silent tide of death.

Or, again, I seem once more to sit in the balcony of a house that looks out toward Vesuvius. It is late; the sky is clouded, the air is still; a grateful coolness comes up from acre after acre of gardens climbing the steep slope; a fluttering breeze, that seems to have lost his way in the dusk, comes timidly and whimsically past, like Ariel, singing as soft as a far-off falling sea in the great pine overhead, making a little sudden flutter in the dry leaves of the thick creeper; like Ariel comes that dainty spirit of the air laden with balmy scents and cool dew. A few lights twinkle in the plain below. Opposite, the sky has an added blackness, an impenetrability of shade; but what is the strange red eye of light that hangs between earth and heaven? And, stranger still, what is that phantasmal gleam of a lip of crags high in the air, and that mysterious, moving, shifting light, like a pale flame, above it? The gloomy spot is a rent in the side of Vesuvius where the smouldering heat has burnt through the crust, and where a day or two before I saw a viscid stream of molten liquor, with the flames playing over it, creeping, creeping through the tunnelled ashes; and in the light above is the lip of Vesuvius itself, with its restless furnace at work, casting up a billowy swell of white oily smoke, while the glare of the fiery pit lights up the under-side of the rising vapours. A ghastly manifestation, that, of sleepless and stern forces, ever at work upon some eternal and bewildering task; and yet so strangely made am I, that these fierce signal-fires, seen afar, but blend with the scents of the musky alleys for me into a thrill of unutterable wonder.

There are hundreds of such pictures stored in my mind, each stamped upon some sensitive particle of the brain, that cannot be obliterated, and each of which the mind can recall at will. And that, too, is a fact of surpassing wonder: what is the delicate instrument that registers, with no seeming volition, these amazing pictures, and preserves them thus with so fantastic a care, retouching them, fashioning them anew, detaching from the picture every sordid detail, till each is as a lyric, inexpressible, exquisite, too fine for words to touch?

Now, it is useless to dictate to others the aims and methods of travel: each must follow his own taste. To myself the acquisition

of knowledge and information is in these matters an entirely negligible thing. To me the one and supreme object is the gathering of a gallery of pictures ; and yet that is not a definite object either, for the whimsical and stubborn spirit refuses to be bound by any regulations in the matter. It will garner up with the most poignant care a single vignette, a tiny detail. I see, as I write, the vision of a great golden-grey carp swimming lazily in the clear pool of Arethusa, the carpet of mesembryanthemum that, for some fancy of its own, chose to involve the whole of a railway-viaduct with its flaunting magenta flowers and its fleshy leaves. I see the edge of the sea, near Syracuse, rimmed with a line of the intensest yellow, and I hear the voice of a guide explaining that it was caused by the breaking up of a stranded orange-boat, so that the waves for many hundred yards threw up on the beach a wrack of fruit ; yet the same wilful and perverse mind will stand impenetrably dumb and blind before the noblest and sweetest prospect, and decline to receive any impression at all. What is perhaps the oddest characteristic of the tricky spirit is that it often chooses moments of intense discomfort and fatigue to master some scene, and take its indelible picture. I suppose that the reason of this is that the mind makes, at such moments, a vigorous effort to protest against the tyranny of the vile body, and to distract itself from instant cares.

But another man may travel for archæological or even statistical reasons. He may wish, like Ulysses, to study 'manners, councils, customs, governments.' He may be preoccupied with questions of architectural style or periods of sculpture. I have a friend who takes up at intervals the study of the pictures of a particular master, and will take endless trouble and undergo incredible discomfort, in order to see the vilest daubs, if only he can make his list complete, and say that he has seen all the reputed works of the master. This instinct is, I believe, nothing but the survival of the childish instinct for collecting, and though I can reluctantly admire any man who spares no trouble to gain an end, the motive is dark and unintelligible to me.

There are some travellers, like Dean Stanley, who drift from the appreciation of natural scenery into the pursuit of historical associations. The story of Stanley as a boy, when he had his first sight of the snowy Alps on the horizon, always delights me. He danced about saying, 'Oh, what shall I do, what shall I do ? But, in later days, Stanley would not go a mile to see a view, while

he would travel all night to see a few stones of a ruin, jutting out of a farmyard wall, if only there was some human and historical tradition connected with the place. I do not myself understand that. I should not wish to see Etna merely because Empedocles is supposed to have jumped down the crater, nor the site of Jericho because the walls fell down at the trumpets of the host. The only interest to me in an historical scene is that it should be in such a condition as that one can to a certain extent reconstruct the original drama, and be sure that one's eyes rest upon very much the same scene as the actors saw. The reason why Syracuse moved me by its acquired beauty, and not for its historical associations, was because I felt convinced that Thucydides, who gives so picturesque a description of the sea-fight, can never have set eyes on the place, and must have embroidered his account from scanty hearsay. But, on the other hand, there are few things in the world more profoundly moving than to see a place where great thoughts have been conceived and great books written, when one is able to feel that the scene is hardly changed. The other day, as I passed before the sacred gate of Rydal Mount, I took my hat off my head with a sense of indescribable reverence. My companion asked me laughingly why I did so. 'Why?' I said, 'From natural piety, of course! I know every detail here as well as if I had lived here, and I have walked in thought a hundred times with the poet, to and fro in the laurelled walks of the garden, up the green shoulder of Nab Scar, and sat in the little parlour, while the fire leapt on the hearth, and heard him "booming" his verses, to be copied by some friendly hand.'

I thrill to see the stately rooms of Abbotsford, with all their sham feudal decorations, the little staircase by which Scott stole away to his solitary work, the folded clothes, the shapeless hat, the ugly shoes, laid away in the glass case; the plantations where he walked with his shrewd bailiff, the place where he stopped so often on the shoulder of the slope, to look at the Eildon Hills, the rooms where he sat, a broken and bereaved man, yet with so gallant a spirit, to wrestle with sorrow and adversity. I wept, I am not ashamed to say, at Abbotsford, at the sight of the stately Tweed rolling his silvery flood past lawns and shrubberies, to think of that kindly, brave, and honourable heart, and his passionate love of all the goodly and cheerful joys of life and earth.

Or, again, it was a solemn day for me to pass from the humble tenement where Coleridge lived, at Nether Stowey, before the

cloud of sad habit had darkened his horizon, and turned him away from the wells of poetry into the deserts of metaphysical speculation, to find, if he could, some medicine for his tortured spirit. I walked with a holy awe along the leafy lanes to Alfoxden, where the beautiful house nestles in the green combe among its oaks, thinking how here, and here, Wordsworth and Coleridge had walked together in the glad days of youth, and planned, in obscurity and secluded joy, the fresh and lovely lyrics of their *matin-prime*.

I turn, I confess, more eagerly to scenes like these than to scenes of historical and political tradition, because there hangs for me a glory about the scene of the conception and genesis of beautiful imaginative work that is unlike any glory that the earth holds. The natural joy of the youthful spirit receiving the impact of mighty thoughts, of poignant impressions, has for me a liberty and a grace which no historical or political associations could ever possess. I could not glow to see the room in which a statesman worked out the details of a Bill for the extension of the franchise, or a modification of the duties upon imports and exports, though I respect the growing powers of democracy and the extinction of privilege and monopoly; but these measures are dimmed and tainted with intrigue and *manceuvre* and *statecraft*. I do not deny their importance, their worth, their nobleness. But not by committees and legislation does humanity triumph. In the vanguard go the blessed adventurous spirits that quicken the moral temperature, and uplift the banner of simplicity and sincerity. The host marches heavily behind, and the commissariat rolls grumbling in the rear of all; and though my place may be with the work-a-day herd, I will send my fancy afar among the leafy valleys and the far-off hills of hope.

But I would not here quarrel with the taste of any man. If a mortal chooses to travel in search of comfortable rooms, new cookery and wines, the livelier gossip of unknown people, in heaven's name let him do so. If another wishes to study economic conditions, standards of life, rates of wages, he has my gracious leave for his pilgrimage. If another desires to amass historical and archæological facts, measurements of hypæthral temples, modes of burial, folk-lore, fortification, God forbid that I should throw cold water on the quest. But the only traveller whom I recognise as a kindred spirit is the man who goes in search of impressions and effects, of tone and atmosphere, of rare and curious beauty, of uplifting association. Nothing that has ever moved the interest,

or the anxiety, or the care, or the wonder, of human beings can ever wholly lose its charm. I have felt my skin prickle and creep at the sight of that amazing thing in the Dublin museum, a section dug bodily out of a claypit, and showing the rough-hewn stones of a cist, deep in the earth, the gravel over it and around it, the roots of the withered grass forming a crust many feet above, and, inside the cist, the rude urn, reversed over a heap of charred ashes; it was not the curiosity of the sight that moved me, but the thought of the old dark life revealed, the dim and savage world, that was yet shot through and pierced, even as now, with sorrow for death, and care for the beloved ashes of a friend and chieftain. Such a sight sets a viewless network of emotion, which seems to interlace far back into the ages, all pulsating and stirring. One sees in a flash that humanity lived, carelessly and brutally perhaps, as we, too, live, and were confronted, as we are confronted, with the horror of the gap, the intolerable mystery of life lapsing into the dark. Ah, the relentless record, the impenetrable mystery! I care very little, I fear, for the historical development of funereal rites, and hardly more for the light that such things throw on the evolution of society. I leave that gratefully enough to the philosophers. What I care for is the touch of nature that shows me my ancient brethren of the dim past—who would have mocked and ridiculed me, I doubt not, if I had fallen into their hands, and killed me as carelessly as one throws aside the rind of a squeezed fruit—yet I am one with them, and perhaps even something of their blood flows in my veins yet.

As I grow older, I tend to travel less and less, and I do not care if I never cross the Channel again. Is there a right and a wrong in the matter, an advisability or an inadvisability, an expediency or an in expediency? I do not think so. Travelling is a pleasure, if it is anything, and a pleasure pursued from a sense of duty is a very fatuous thing. I have no good reason to give, only an accumulation of small reasons. Dr. Johnson once said that any number of insufficient reasons did not make a sufficient one, just as a number of rabbits did not make a horse. A lively but misleading illustration: he might as well have said that any number of sovereigns did not make a cheque for a hundred pounds. I suppose that I do not like the trouble, to start with; and then I do not like being adrift from my own beloved country. Then I cannot converse in any foreign language, and half the pleasure of travelling comes from being able to lay oneself alongside of a new point of view. Then, too, I realise, as I grow older, how little I have really seen of my own incomparably

beautiful and delightful land, so that, like the hero of Newman's hymn,

I do not ask to see
The distant scene ; one step enough for me.

And, lastly, I have a reason which will perhaps seem a far-fetched one. Travel is essentially a distraction, and I do not want to be distracted any more. One of the mistakes that people make, in these Western latitudes, is to be possessed by an inordinate desire to drown thought. The aim of many men whom I know seems to me to be occupied in some absolutely definite way, so that they may be as far as possible unaware of their own existence. Anything to avoid reflection ! A normal Englishman does not care very much what the work and value of his occupation is, as long as he is occupied ; and I am not at all sure that we came into the world to be occupied. Christ, in the Gospel story, rebuked the busy Martha for her bustling anxieties, her elaborate attentions to her guests, and praised the leisurely Mary for desiring to sit and hear Him talk. Socrates spent his life in conversation. I do not say that contemplation is a duty, but I cannot help thinking that we are not forbidden to scrutinise life, to wonder what it is all about, to study its problems, to apprehend its beauty and significance. We admire a man who goes on making money long after he has made far more than he needs ; we think a life honourably spent in editing Greek books. Socrates in one of Plato's dialogues quotes the opinion of a philosopher to the effect that when a man has made enough to live upon, he should begin to practise virtue. 'I think he should begin even earlier,' says the interlocutor ; and I am wholly in agreement with him. Travel is one of the expedients to which busy men resort, in order that they may forget their existence. I do not venture to think this exactly culpable, but I feel sure that it is a pity that people do not do less and think more. If a man asks what good comes from thinking, I can only retort by asking what good comes from the multiplication of unnecessary activity. I am quite as much at a loss as anyone else to say what is the object of life, but I do not feel any doubt that we are not sent into the world to be in a fuss. Like the lobster in *The Water-Babies*, I cry, 'Let me alone ; I want to think !' because I believe that that occupation is at least as profitable as many others.

And then, too, without travelling more than a few miles from my door, I can see things fully as enchanting as I can see by ranging

Europe. I rode to-day along a well-known road ; just where the descent began to fall into a quiet valley, there stands a windmill—not one of the ugly black circular towers that one sometimes sees, but one of the old crazy boarded sort, standing on a kind of stalk ; out of the little loopholes of the mill the flour had dusted itself prettily over the weather-boarding. From a mysterious hatch halfway up, leaned the miller, drawing up a sack of grain with a little pulley. There is nothing so enchanting as to see a man leaning out of a dark doorway high up in the air. He drew the sack in, he closed the panel. The sails whirled, flapping and creaking ; and I loved to think of him in the dusty gloom, with the gear grumbling among the rafters, tipping the golden grain into its funnel, while the rattling hopper below poured out its soft stream of flour. Beyond the mill, the ground sank to a valley ; the roofs clustered round a great church tower, the belfry windows blinking solemnly. Hard by the ancient Hall peeped out from its avenue of elms. That was a picture as sweet as anything I have ever seen abroad, as perfect a piece of art as could be framed, and more perfect than anything that could be painted, because it was a piece out of the old kindly, quiet life of the world. One ought to learn, as the years flow on, to love such scenes as that, and not to need to have the blood and the brain stirred by romantic prospects, peaked hills, well-furnished galleries, magnificent buildings : *mutare animum*, that is the secret, to grow more hopeful, more alive to delicate beauties, more tender, less exacting. Nothing, it is true, can give us peace ; but we get nearer it by loving the familiar scene, the old homestead, the tiny valley, the wayside copse, than we do by racing over Europe on the track of Giorgione, or over Asia in pursuit of local colour. After all, everything has its appointed time. It is good to range in youth, to rub elbows with humanity, and then, as the days go on, to take stock, to remember, to wonder, ‘To be content with little, to serve beauty well.’

WROTH.¹

BY AGNES AND EGERTON CASTLE.

CHAPTER X.

As the door closed Miss Beljoy's anger exploded :

'Pon my soul!' she exclaimed aloud, 'pon my soul, here's a tidy set of fellows!' She flung her stick upon the table. 'Here, you black dummy, won't you let us have a look at you? You're an old love, I'll swear—or else a bailiff in disguise.'

The figure took a step forward. A cold, clear voice spoke :

'Peggy!' And the veil was thrown back.

'You—you . . . here!' The girl's eyes started from their sockets. A greenish pallor spread over her face, emphasised by a deepening red spot on each cheek.

'You?' cried Peggy Beljoy again. Then the blood welled back into her face; her wide nostrils quivered: 'Ah, you've dogged me again! But I'm not a poor dying wretch this time, to be preached at, and watched, and kept like a child! I'm free of you now, Madame Belgiojoso. I need not take your bounty now, thank God! I've got an income of my own, and I've made a name for myself too. Peg me no Peggies, if you please. I'm Miss Beljoy of Drury Lane, and I'm going to be Lady Wroth of Hurley Abbey. What, you've come spying on me again? You must have precious little to do!'

'Be quiet, Peggy,' said Juliana sternly. 'Listen to me. I am not spying on you. I had no idea that you intended coming here, when I came here myself. I was not even sure it was you, until you spoke. I never thought that I should have to interfere with your life again. I hoped I never should see you again. This is the work of fate. Hush, listen to me! I have but one thing to say: you must give this up.'

Peggy almost screamed.

'Give this up? And why, may I ask? I ain't poaching on your ground now—am I? Oh, I'm to give it up, am I? I'm not

¹ Copyright, 1907, by Agnes and Egerton Castle, in the United States of America.

to be made an honest woman of, ain't I? Not to become as grand a lady as you are, I suppose? What is it to you, anyhow?' The girl panted. Again the dry cough shook her. 'What are you here for? What business is it of yours?'

'My business in this matter you would not understand. My business with you is this: you gave me a promise once. Peggy, I claim it now.'

Once more the sickly pallor crept about the actress's mouth.

'I wish to God,' she cried passionately, 'I'd never laid eyes on that wicked old husband of yours! I wish my mother had strangled you, when she had the nursing of you—you are the curse of my life!' She broke into a whimper, sudden as all her changes of mood. 'I'm sure you mean well with me, my lady. It is not so brazen as it seems. I like the looks of the young man, I do indeed—it may be the saving of me.'

'Of you!' cried Juliana. The great purple eyes flashed as only once before Peggy had seen them flash. 'Of you!—I'm not thinking of you. You are the least of my thoughts. I've saved you once, when your own evil deed had brought on you a righteous judgment. You swore to me, then, that whatever I asked of you, you would do. It was a solemn oath, you called God to witness it. Now, I tell you, I claim it.'

Peggy's eyes rolled; too well did she remember that rash, that awful vow: 'May God strike me dead on the spot if I break my promise!' Peggy did not want to die, and she was superstitious.

'Well, what is it you want me to do?' she asked sullenly, after a long pause.

'To let me take your place to-day, first with the attorney, then at the church,' said the quiet voice. Juliana flung the clinging veil from her head. 'I will wear that hat and veil of yours, Peggy; and that blue pelisse will cover me from head to foot. We are of a height, no one will suspect the change. And that is what I wish.'

Peggy fell into a chair, staring, unable to credit her ears.

'My lady!' she gasped at last, 'what, in the name of mercy, do you mean to do?'

'To take your place; I have told you so,' repeated the Countess Mordante, steadily. 'I am going to be married to Lord Wroth to-day, instead of you.'

The foster-sisters fixed each other a second or two in silence. Then the girl's face became convulsed with ugly laughter:

'And the poor old man scarcely cold in his grave yet,' she jeered, 'why, I mourned him as long myself!' Then anger broke higher than insolence. 'It's the meanest thing I ever heard! Taking advantage of a poor girl—robbing her of her chances!'

'Silence!' said Juliana. There was not a quiver upon the composure of her countenance. She stood, her delicate brows scarcely contracted, thinking profoundly.

'The circumstances are so strange,' she said, as if to herself. 'No one will wonder if the woman whom Lord Wroth marries to-day for the sake of some mad wager, or some fatal freak, should hide her face during the ceremony. He will care least of all. Afterwards—afterwards'—her lips parted upon the quickened breath, a light leaped to her eye, a faint glow to her cheek. Then she remembered the listener: 'Meanwhile, for the interview with the lawyer, I will go to your rooms.'

Peggy turned, raging, yet afraid to rebel.

'And me? what's to become of me?'

'Stay,' said Juliana suddenly, 'whatever settlement is to be made on the future Lady Wroth, rest assured, Peggy, you shall not be at the loss of it.'

'Thank you for nothing, my lady,' said the actress between her teeth.

As Juliana drew her veil close about her again, the shadow of a sigh was on her lips. How deeply, even in these few months, the stamp of her reckless life had become impressed upon the girl. Perverse as she had been before, there had been a youthful irresponsibility about her that appealed and condoned. Now this bold and coarsened creature seemed to have lost all connection with the little foster-sister she had once loved.

Miss Beljoy took the lead through the lounging groups that hung about the hotel door. The white fall of lace was still thrown back on her hat; and despite the fury seething in her soul, the murmurs, the outspoken comments, the laughter and curiosity which greeted her, were all grateful to her vanity. This atmosphere of notoriety and admiration, insolent or otherwise, of curiosity and excitement, were as the breath of her nostrils. The veiled figure following her, so dark in her mourning against the spring sunshine, evoked but little interest. Some of the idlers about the parades cast a flier at the widow who was so keen on a second mate. But Juliana's thought wrapped her round as closely as her disguise.

No outside judgment could touch her soul, even as no vulgar glance could reach her countenance.

In the queer little room over the bookshop, with its sloping floor and its striped paper, its hard, spindle-legged sofa, its narrow chimney-piece and dim round mirror, which was Peggy's parlour, Juliana and her foster-sister—the two so strangely linked together, so deeply apart—were once more alone. Fresh storms had been gathering in Peggy during the passage; and, no sooner was the door closed upon them than it broke out. She caught at Juliana's hand.

'Don't take him from me, don't!' she cried. 'Leave me my chance . . . for the sake of the days when we were children together and my soul was as pure as yours! For the sake of the mother who cheated me of my rights that she might nourish you! I went to that place for a freak, it is true. I don't care if you know it. It is good for an actress to be talked about. It can't do her harm, anyhow. "I'll have my fun out of this crack-brained rake of a lord," says I to myself, when I read his placard, "then I'll teach him his place." I knew he'd choose me ——' She paused, the tears stood on her cheek, but above them her eyes shot triumph.

Juliana withdrew her hand from the hot clasp. Had she shown him her face, there—before them all, he would have fallen at her feet. She knew that. But it could not have been—it could not have been. In that sordid room, in that scene of insolent triviality, of mockery, of cynicism, a mummer herself in an ignoble comedy, she could not have revealed herself.

'And he did choose me,' went on Peggy, 'and I, the moment I saw him coming upon us, his eyes so bright, his hair all flashing in the sun, I said: "That's the man for my money." What do you want with him? You're too good for the likes of him! What would you do with him—you, so virtuous? But we'd suit each other. I don't want them good, and shouldn't think he'd want them good. And I'd be My Lady, Lady Wroth! You're a ladyship already. . . . It's hard you should grudge me the chance of my life!'

The actress gave herself to each mood of passion as the reed to the eddying current. She was moved by her own pleading, convinced by her own rhetoric. She ended, sure of her cause.

'I keep you to your oath, Peggy,' said Juliana, when silence fell.

She had stood unmoved—no marble more cold—by the other's emotion. For a moment the girl fixed her with an eye of almost animal hatred, then she drew a strangled breath and clutched her breast. Fear and anger bandied her between them. But at every temptation to defy her vow the hand of death seemed to grasp at her throat.

'Damn you!' she cried at last—'we are quits, then! I borrowed your old husband, you're stealing my young one!'

Juliana looked at her watch. 'This attorney,' she said, 'he may be here at any moment now. Peggy, I will take your cloak and veil.'

Peggy tore her hat from her head, and flung it with its floating laces on the table; then she shook herself out of her pelisse and left it as it fell on the floor. With the hard red spot on either cheek she watched her foster-sister unwind herself in her turn from veil and mantle; watched the firm, beautiful figure emerge like a flower from the sheath; watched with dismay and hatred.

Juliana's rich pallor flashed into loveliness as it met the bloom of the velvet; under the sweep of the hat brim, the soft shadows of the plumes, her beauty shone triumphant.

'Leave me, Peggy. You can remain in the bedroom.'

She ordered and waited for the girl's sullen exit. Then she drew one of the stiff Chippendale chairs to the table and sat herself down to wait. Peggy's primroses lay close to her feet, where they had fallen during her furious disrobing. Juliana stooped and picked them up, holding them to her face under the veil. Her mind was set on strange deeds, and she had no pleasure in them. But the spring flowers seemed to touch her cheek with a fresh caress, to breathe, in their fragrance, a promise as of something delicate and sweet.

'Miss Beljoy,' said the rosy, down-at-heel slut that waited on the lodgers at Mr. Wood's, 'a gentleman for you, please, Miss.' She slammed a card on the table and her flat soles were heard slopping down the narrow carpetless stairs.

The lawyer halted on the threshold an instant.

'Miss Beljoy, of Drury Lane?' he queried of the fine lady who was seated at the table in blue velvet and plumed hat. The feathers on the hat waved as the lady made a slow inclination.

Mr. Minchin closed the door and came across the sloping floor.

The statuesque folds of sapphire velvet were disturbed, as a white hand indicated a chair. He sat and considered the figure opposite to him. A fall of very handsome lace practically concealed the countenance. The pelisse, however, was so disposed as to reveal glimpses of what Mr. Minchin (connoisseur in his way) described to himself as a remarkably elegant shape. Between the scalloped edge of the lace and the blue velvet there was a line of ivory throat, round and stately. The hand that had courteously indicated his seat had now rejoined its fellow; and both lay folded loosely over each other on the table. He gave a contemptuous inner chuckle at sight of a wedding ring.

Miss Beljoy, of Drury Lane, had rapidly become a noted person—if not for her talent at least for her attractions. And from the instant that he had heard of the identity of the future Lady Wroth, he had jumped to the opinion which Holroyd had candidly imparted to him a few minutes before in the street. ‘A put-up job, mark me, sir, mark me. Martindale and I saw Wroth tipping her the wink when it came to the point. By the lord, if I should ever be forced to marry at a day’s notice, I hope my fate will wear as alluring a little muzzle!’

True, the lawyer had just received from his client explanations and instructions somewhat incompatible with this view. But Lord Wroth’s eccentricity was becoming systematic. And Mr. Minchin was still too angry with him, not to be inclined to place the worst construction upon his motives.

The lawyer had passed a sleepless night. While his pride bade him carry out his threat and abandon the young man to his fate, every instinct in his legal being, a kind of professional passion, and a natural tenacity of purpose, rebelled against being beaten in a case the gaining of which must prove so profitable alike to client and firm. At first, indeed, he would not admit to himself that it was for any other purpose than a kind of mental relaxation during the long hours of vigil that he had begun to examine the various manners in which the license difficulty could be surmounted, and a legal marriage accomplished in spite of its apparent impossibility. Though a man of the utmost rectitude, no lawyer in the land had made a deeper study of the ways in which the spirit of laws could be evaded whilst their letter was accomplished. In this case, however, there was but one loophole; and to get through it would mean a tight squeeze, involving the loss of certain rags and shreds of integrity, nay, the possible loss to himself of that good

cloak of reputation which he had worn so honourably all these years.

Yet the more Mr. Minchin dallied with this mental exercise, the more irresistible its fascination became. He could never have told the exact moment when his resolution to take the risk was formed. Yet when the dawn broke, he was not only resolved, but filled with an odd sort of eagerness for, almost enthusiasm in, his questionable scheme.

He could hardly wait for a seasonable hour to ride into Tunbridge Wells, to select a clergyman suitable to his plans. His mad client's last words had been : ' It's your business, Minchin, to make it legal—that's where you come in.'

Mr. Minchin was determined to do his business. Lord Wroth's marriage was apparently going to be as disreputable as the rest of his proceedings. It might, probably would, lead to trouble hereafter, but his lawyer would see that it was binding. As to its consequences, in other legal directions, if unpleasant consequences there should be—why, it would be his lordship's business to bear with them. As he gazed upon the notorious person whom it had pleased Lord Wroth to select, in the most notorious manner conceivable, the thought arose that, no doubt, the madcap had had after all some method in his madness, and had chosen this singular bride in so singular a manner with some plan of present enjoyment and future freedom. And he rejoiced grimly in the knowledge of the solidity of the bond he was preparing for them.

He now took deliberate stock of the lady's finery, her farce of grand deportment, of beauty retiringly veiled, and the sharp smile sketched itself on his lips. Mr. Minchin had his vicarious experience of the world ; he knew that attitude of dignified reserve in which, when your lady of pleasure chooses to assume it, she will outmatron any matron, Roman or British.

' Were I to beg her to lift her veil,' he sneered to himself, ' she'd be capable of raising a cry of " Unhand me, villain ! " in the best tragic manner. Well, I'm sure my young man deserves no better. Yet, if time were not so short. . . . Madam,' he began aloud, in his driest tone, ' I presume I am correct in understanding that you have been prepared for my errand—in short that you have agreed to marry Lord Wroth in such exceptional circumstances this morning.'

Again the slow inclination of the head.

' For reasons,' he went on, ' which, no doubt, his lordship will

afterwards explain to you, Lord Wroth desires his marriage to take place not later than to-day. In this very peculiar situation there are matters of paramount importance to attend to in a very short time, and therefore my interview with you must be as brief as possible.'

The plumes here remained perfectly steady. With a jerk of the shoulders the lawyer proceeded somewhat tartly :

'The name of Beljoy, madam, I take it, is assumed—an assumption most usual for stage purposes. Your real name is ?'

'Juliana Mordante Belgiojoso.'

It was a low deliberate voice that dropped the three words from beneath the veil. The lawyer's grey eyebrows were elevated.

'Would you kindly spell it ? Thanks. Ah, I see now the connection : Belgiojoso, Beljoy. But the name is foreign.' He was writing rapidly in his note-book. 'Domicile ?'

'Formerly of Italy ; now of no fixed abode.'

Mr. Minchin hesitated a moment. But it was scarce his mission at such a juncture to create difficulties. Time pressed. It was not the moment to investigate. He passed on rapidly.

'Spinster, of course,' he said, his pencil poised, sure of the answer.

'Widow.'

Mr. Minchin started. He glanced sharply at her : his face became corrugated into lines of frowning perplexity. Before the legal mind, vistas of horrid possibilities spread themselves. A husband ?—these ladies had ways of burying their impediments. And these impediments had a way of rising from their graves whenever it was profitable to do so. The case was common, common to monotony ; but in connection with himself, with the fortunes of Wroth, bigamy, scandal, annulment—his hair bristled. His soul moaned for the security of honest Mary Campbell, and for the hundredth time he anathematised the insensate folly that had rejected her.

'Married, madam ?' he queried sternly.

'Widowed,' said the steady voice.

The words somehow carried conviction ; there was not a tremor among the black and white feathers, not a twitch of the folded hands. For the first time he felt a sudden absurd temptation, instantly repressed, to snatch away the veil. What would the face be like of one who had such a voice and such hands ? 'Pon my soul,' he cried to himself impatiently, 'that's a confoundedly

dangerous woman—"Alluring little muzzle," indeed!—How these puppies talk!

If his impression counted for anything, incomplete as it was, the future Lady Wroth was none of your pretty fools, but a deep, designing woman! One too clever to place herself at variance with the law. Well, his responsibility ended with the marriage. He proceeded hurriedly:

'With regard to settlements, I think you will have no cause for complaint. Lord Wroth intends to allow you for life two thousand pounds a year—which will be paid quarterly in advance. This will be settled on you by deed. He wishes me to inform you that he attaches no condition to this handsome settlement save one, which no doubt will be as agreeable to yourself as to him, . . . though it is somewhat unusual in a matrimonial contract. It is this: that you respect his liberty of action as completely as he will respect yours. You are to consider yourself absolutely free to pursue your profession, to choose your residence, so long as it is not within twenty miles of his own. In fact your existences are to separate absolutely after the ceremony. This condition he has instructed me to make unmistakably clear to you. I need not point out, madam, that sentiment could not enter into an alliance contracted in such exceptional circumstances.'

The plumes bent very low.

The door creaked suddenly. The lawyer shot an uneasy look over his shoulder, and waited a moment. But their privacy remained undisturbed.

'The ceremony takes place,' he resumed, 'at St. Thomas's at a quarter before noon. May I request you to be there in good time?'

'I will be there,' said Juliana.

The lawyer paused and hemmed. He began to tap the table with a dry finger. If it could be said that Mr. Minchin was ever embarrassed, it was on this occasion. He was determined to keep secret the real cause of Lord Wroth's hasty marriage from the person chiefly concerned until its conditions had been irrevocably accepted. It would have been turning the cat into the dairy! God knows what extortionate bargain the woman might exact, could she guess the fortune that was at stake. Nevertheless, to conceal his own anxiety for the immediate tying of the knot, to explain the subterfuge that would be necessary to make valid the license, was no easy task.

'You have some previous acquaintance with his lordship?' he began tentatively.

There was the faintest inclination. It seemed to mark the degree of acquaintanceship.

'You are aware at least that he is of an eccentric disposition?'

Her head remained steady.

'At any rate, madam,' said the lawyer pettishly, 'you have seen an example of his lordship's humour to-day. It is his pleasure to conduct the serious business of life upon the lines of schoolboy frolic. When, a fortnight ago, I received his instructions to obtain a marriage license'—never was the lawyer's voice more assured, never his eye more steady, than upon the utterance of this stupendous lie—'he apparently had fixed his choice upon another lady, for the name, he told me, was that of ah—Mary Campbell——'

He drew the license from his pocket and spread it on the table.

'It may be,' he pursued, 'that the lady in question has failed in her promise, and that Lord Wroth wishes to show—wishes to——' he began to grow confused, his unusual burst of romantic inspiration began to fail him. 'At any rate'—his finger drummed—'he has set his heart on being wed to-day. Nothing can restrain him from his determination. And to ensure the legality of the ceremony, indeed to ensure the ceremony taking place at all, it will be necessary for you to consent to sign the register under the name of Mary Campbell. Are you attending to me, madam?' he cried sharply. 'This is a delicate, a serious matter, one in which the consequences of the slightest misunderstanding would be deplorable.'

Juliana, her fingers suddenly compressed in their clasp, had been struck to the heart by a new doubt. Was it possible—was this the explanation? Had Wroth given his heart, and was this a lover's frenzied revenge—then, what was she doing here?

Mr. Minchin's next words flung a quick light upon her road again.

'You will have to decide, madam, as time is pressing. Your scruples may be praiseworthy, but misplaced at this juncture. May I remind you again that, Lord Worth being resolved that the marriage shall take place to-day, it will be easy for him to find someone less scrupulous. You understand,' he tapped the license once more, 'that in spite of this appearance of a deception as to the name, this marriage will remain as binding as law and Church can make it? I will quote for your complete satisfaction

the maxim of English law concerning the marriage contract which has a special bearing on the point—*Consensus, non concubitus, facit matrimonium*, which means that it is the consent of the parties which makes the marriage. I will request your attention for a minute or two more. It is most important that you should understand very clearly that this question of license is one which only affects the clergyman—it covers, in a measure, his responsibility. Concerning the parties themselves—if a man and a woman, neither having any impediment (such, for instance, as a living husband or wife), agree, before a recognised minister in holy orders, to espouse each other, that man and that woman are legally, irrevocably married. The civil contract, *per verba de presenti* (as we say), is complete; and the religious ceremony, whatever irregularity may subsequently be discovered and . . . censured, is fully binding. No matter therefore under what name—or names—you and Lord Wroth chose to espouse each other before the altar, so long as you and he are agreed so to take each other nothing can invalidate the legality of the union. The only person who might incur some subsequent unpleasantness, hereafter, would be the clergyman. But, ah!—Mr. Minchin waived the immaterial detail, with a wave of two grey fingers. ‘For yourself, madam, you do but employ a subterfuge which the circumstances render necessary. But do not forget to answer to the name of Mary.’

‘I will do it,’ said Juliana suddenly. She rose from her seat. It was a movement of determined acceptance.

‘Time presses,’ repeated the lawyer, greedily pursuing his success. ‘The ceremony is fixed for a quarter to twelve—it is time we should be on the way.’ His hand shook a little with suppressed excitement. ‘If you will make use of my chaise, which is at the door, and accept of my escort, I shall be honoured. The townsfolk are somewhat excited, you might be inconvenienced.’

Juliana moved acquiescingly towards the door; and Mr. Minchin found himself, to his own subsequent astonishment, assisting her to his carriage with as much deference as ever he showed the most respectable dowager among his clients. Triumph was mounting ever higher in him. Not only had he rounded the awkward corner with perfect success; but by this brilliant capture he was preventing the bride from holding communication with anyone but himself, and so providing against her receiving any inopportune information.

As he took seat by her side, however, he was conscious of a most unusual sensation: that of being baffled. All his precon-

ceived ideas of the class to which he had no doubt his companion belonged gave way before the impression, incomplete as it was, of her personality. He was haunted by those still, clasped hands, ivory, beautiful ; by the echo of her voice. The thought rose again that here was a remarkable woman, a dangerous, deep, dark character, or he was greatly mistaken. Well, with the saving of Wroth's fortune his task was ended !

CHAPTER XI.

THERE was no such eager crowd in the streets as Mr. Minchin had anticipated. The honest townsfolk that had assembled to applaud the latest prank of the mad lord of Hurley Burley were not to be taken in by any statement of the burlesque placard. No one had ever heard of anybody being married in that way. It was only his lordship's joke on the town and on the silly women who had made such a spectacle of themselves. The community, moreover, was beginning to have somewhat of a surfeit of Lord Wroth's pleasantries. The idlers, therefore, hung about the bar, drinking and applauding themselves for seeing through the hoax. Busy people went to their business and gave the discreditable matter little further thought. The streets were quiet.

The distant church of St. Thomas was empty, save for Lord Wroth and his three friends, when Juliana and Mr. Minchin arrived. In the porch Mr. Minchin halted a second in his jerking hurried gait.

'Have you anybody to give you away ?' he asked of Juliana—
'Shall I undertake the office ?'

To anyone less absorbed in her own thought, the disinterested attorney must have seemed vastly interested in facilitating that ceremony which, according to his own assertion, was a mere freak. But the bride accepted without appearing to notice anything singular in his eagerness.

'If you will be so kind,' she murmured.

Subsequently, Mr. Minchin recalled his share in the events of the morning as a man recalls the irresponsible deeds of a dream. He gave her his arm and thus they came up the nave. Had ever legal responsibility taken a stranger part in a questionable enterprise ?

It was a little, bare, yellow church ; but the sunshine was striking in through the white-paned windows, and brought a faint

warmth about Juliana's heart. The clergyman was a heavy-faced, inert-looking man, with a bewildered, doubtful expression of countenance. He was constantly jogged by a bright, pert clerk upon the details of the ceremony over which he seemed inclined to pause as if to ponder upon its advisability.

Mr. Scaife and Sir Thomas Holroyd conversed carelessly, with scarce a lowering of the voice. Martindale held himself sulkily apart. Wroth himself—his natural pallor startlingly accentuated—booted and mud-stained, stood at the altar-step with an air of fierce, resentful recklessness that would have better suited a highwayman at Tyburn, with all his energies bent upon dying game.

The bride silently took her place and awaited her moment with that sphinx-like air of repose to which the heavy folds of her impenetrable white lace added mystery. Mr. Minchin fell back, his nervous hand jingling the seals at his fob.

'I, George Conrad, take thee, Mary, to my wedded wife, to have and to hold . . . for richer for poorer . . . till death us do part.'

That voice, which Juliana had heard veiled to the most exquisite tenderness, resounded harsh, savage; the vow came almost like a curse.

'I, Mary, take thee, George Conrad——'

She, dreading lest her first-spoken word to him would be her betrayal, breathed the bidden promise in a mere whisper. But there was a fantastic sort of sweetness for her even about that moment! She was glad that here, at least, there was none of the planned subterfuge or deceit—the name was her own, as much as Juliana, thank God!—and she meant every syllable of the beautiful and sacred bargain.

Mr. Minchin, under the stress of his multifarious anxieties, had omitted to think of a detail usually attended to by the bridegroom himself. There was a moment's awkward pause. Where was the ring? Martindale, the best man, surveyed the difficulty with sneering satisfaction.

'The ring, my lord,' whispered the man of business. 'Any ring will serve. Your lordship's own signet.'

He laid agitated fingers on Wroth's hand to loosen the trinket. Impatiently the bridegroom thrust him back, drew the ring himself, and with disdainful touch completed the ceremony.

The circlet hung as loosely on Juliana's finger as the union it

symbolised in the bridegroom's purpose. The deed was accomplished ; the man and the woman were husband and wife.

Juliana found herself being led to the vestry in correct fashion ; but, once across the threshold, Wroth dropped his arm from her touch, and strode to the table as if she had not existed. It hardly needed a glance at his face to make her aware of the mood which had hold of him. A fury, the more savage that it was dumb, seemed to fill the very air that surrounded him. It withered the constrained congratulation on the clergyman's lips ; it deepened the anxiety wrinkling Mr. Minchin's brow and hovering in his restless glance. It damped the hilarity of the two lively friends. Before it, Martindale's sullenness faded into childish insignificance. To Juliana it brought strangely mingled terror and joy. She was glad that after his horrible light-mindedness of the morning he should at least feel his own degradation, recoil from this travesty of a most sacred contract, from this voluntary choice of baseness in lieu of the best that life can give. On the other hand, here was indeed a man of passion so unruly that he might well sacrifice everything for vengeance ; and if, as the lawyer had suggested, vengeance were the true motive of this day's doing, where did her own hopes stand ? Where was the foundation stone of that daring palace of happiness that in her mind she had built for them both ?

Wroth signed the register, dashed the pen from him, flung a look about the circle, to end upon her—a look before which her heart stood still. Then, as if the air of the little place suffocated him, he pulled open the side door and plunged into the graveyard, desolately green in the shadow of the church. The wind rushed in upon them, charged with chill. Juliana thought it carried the breath of death.

The voice of Mr. Minchin in her ear recalled her vanishing courage :

'Will you kindly sign—— ? Yes, under Lord Wroth's name, here, if you please.'

He pointed to the place with his left hand, and pressed the quill on her with the other. As she stooped mechanically, he bent over her.

'Mary Campbell.' The words were breathed into her ear, compellingly, and there was a tremor in the faint sound.

She was not of those who draw back, though her whole being shrank from the falsehood. She wrote steadily ; then she hesitated

a second, and moved by an uncontrollable impulse, set her own name underneath—Mary Juliana Belgiojoso.

Mr. Minchin made a movement, quickly restrained, drew a sharp breath, and shot an angry glance at her, baffled again by the veil. Nevertheless, the deed was done, and even the exposure of the truth could not now invalidate its legality. It was, however, none of his purpose to see the suspicions of the parson further aroused; and now, beholding this worthy fumbling for his glasses and settling them on his nose to survey the newly signed page, he braced himself.

‘Sir!’ said the clergyman, straightening himself with a jerk; then, flustered and irate: ‘This is a strange business. I have never yet been called upon,’ he went on, warming in his protest, ‘to join together a couple who have behaved in this manner.’

His eyes rolled from the open door to the rigid figure of the deserted bride.

‘And now, this lady’s double signature, these two names. Only, Mr. Minchin, for your well-known character—even with a special license’—he tapped the document on the table—‘I would have hesitated—’

‘My dear sir,’ interrupted Mr. Minchin, with some eagerness, ‘did I not tell you that the lady is an actress? It is perfectly correct that she should sign her real name as well as the accepted name by which she is known to the world. Belgiojoso—Beljoy. You will remember the lady’s stage name is Beljoy.’ He hurried away from the delicate subject. ‘And you are further acquainted, my dear sir, with Lord Wroth’s peculiarities.’ He lowered his voice. ‘You are no stranger here. We touched upon the matter this very morning—my responsibility as his legal adviser—’

‘My responsibility, sir!’ broke in, in his turn, the dissatisfied divine. ‘This is a most untoward affair, my responsibility—’

‘Is completely covered, I assure you. The license is in order, and so are the signatures. Fortunately, my dear sir,’ proceeded Mr. Minchin suavely, ‘neither of us has to answer for the consequences of an eccentric young man’s method of conducting his matrimonial venture. Madam,’ he turned to the bride, ‘will your ladyship once more accept of my escort? Lord Wroth, no doubt, awaits us outside.’

The Reverend Charles Jones beckoned up his sharp clerk from the church with a portentous wag of his forefinger; and, as Mr. Minchin led Juliana hurriedly from the vestry into

the graveyard, both could be seen poring together over register and license.

Mr. Minchin drew out a yellow silk handkerchief and mopped his brow.

Wroth was standing, with his back to the church, staring at a grey tombstone. Sir Thomas and Martindale had disappeared. Mr. Scaife alone stood beside him, and broke off, in the midst of some laughing phrase, to glance over his shoulder at the approaching pair. He took off his hat with an immense flourish.

'A thousand congratulations to your ladyship.'

The lawyer, tightening his arm over Juliana's hand, pressed her forward.

'My lord,' he said, in a low peremptory voice, 'you must now take Lady Wroth with you in the chaise.' And, as the bridegroom stepped back with a livid frown, he added: 'For heaven's sake, my lord, don't spoil all now. The parson is already much annoyed—indeed, alarmed. And I warned your lordship that a parting at the church door would be contributing an unnecessary element of suspicion.'

Scaife caught the words, and a sudden sardonic smile spread over his countenance.

'Nay,' said he, 'Wroth has promised us a wedding breakfast, Mr. Minchin. Martindale and Tom Holroyd have gone ahead of us to set the matter going. Now this rascal Wroth is all for ratting away to London. We've told him a bargain's a bargain. My lady, I'll not be done out of drinking your health.'

The leer with which he accompanied these words was lost upon the supposititious Beljoy, impassive-looking as ever, under her veil.

'Damn you!' said Wroth in a deadly level voice to the attorney. 'And damn you!' he went on in the same tone, turning upon Scaife. Then he took a step forward, and made a faint inclination towards Juliana. 'The parting,' he said, 'the parting, then, my lady, will not be at the church door. I crave your company at breakfast at the Crown Hotel.'

He was turning on his heel when Mr. Minchin put out his hand and arrested him. As Wroth shook off the touch, his concentrated exasperation broke forth in biting undertone:

'Old Satan, you've led me far enough. I'll go your way no more! Gad, man, you've tied the rope round my neck!' He

thrust two fingers inside his stock as if to loosen some constricting knot. 'I'll not be shut up in your chaise there with that woman for all the money in the Bank of England. I'm strangling as it is!'

He flung himself away from the lawyer's vain protest, set off running over the graves as one hunted, and was gone. Mr. Minchin wiped his forehead, and once more resigned himself to play the squire.

Juliana took seat in the chaise, as silently as her companion. It was only when the old vehicle had moved some distance, with many a creak and rattle, that she spoke :

'I desire to be set down at the lodgings where you found me.'

'You will have to appear at the breakfast, I can tell you that,' asserted Mr. Minchin, with considerable irritation. 'Lord, ma'am, here have I been working—doing very questionable things, I can assure you, ma'am—to ensure the validity of this ceremony, and 'pon my soul, there are you and my lord doing your best to upset the apple-cart!'

'Oh, I will be there!' said Juliana. The feast, it seemed, was to be at her own hotel. Well, she would be there. What was done could not be undone; she must carry her part through, although a boding of unhappy end weighed heavily upon her.

'Ma'am,' said the attorney, whose patience had given way with equal suddenness and completeness, 'you may please yourself. As for me, I'll have a bit of dinner in quiet. I've done my work. I wash my hands of the rest, ma'am, I wash my hands of the rest!'

Mr. Scaife, left alone in the churchyard, looked after the retreating chaise with humorous astonishment. He wagged his head and gave an inward chuckle of exceeding gusto.

'Gad, of all the amazing marriages! Bridegroom mad. Bride tied up like a mummy—as silent as one, anyhow. What card has the Beljoy minx got up her sleeve, with her airs of mystery?'

Had Mr. Scaife watched the new Lady Wroth enter the door of Mr. Wood's lodging, veiled, just as she had left it, and as slow pacing; had he, lingering on the pavement, been further a witness of the reappearance, ten minutes later, of the fair Peggy Beljoy, coquettishly attired in dove-coloured silks, shot with changing tones, her bright face exposed to the gaze of all mankind, beneath a little turban of blue that threw the colour of her hair in high

relief; had he seen her step forth, challenging the very pavement with the beat of her conquering foot, and set her way for the Crown Hotel, Mr. Scaife would certainly have found stuff for wider astonishment.

When Juliana re-entered the actress's apartments, she found her in her bedroom, deeply engaged in toilet preparations. The girl turned upon her a countenance in which satisfaction and resentment were oddly blended.

'Well,' she cried mockingly, 'is your swindle successful? And what did he say when he saw it wasn't me?'

Juliana laid the borrowed hat upon the bed and divested herself of the gay pelisse. Then she faced her foster-sister.

'He knows nothing yet,' she said calmly.

'What?' cried Peggy, with an eldritch laugh. 'Never raised your veil? Never a kiss for you, you his bride—not even an attempt to raise her veil! You have secured an ardent bridegroom, my lady!'

'Have I not just said, Peggy,' said Juliana, 'that Lord Wroth believes he has married you?'

Across Peggy's countenance anger swept like a wave, to be succeeded by an insolent gaiety.

'Pon my soul,' she cried, 'if he had married me, foster-sister, I'd have found the way to make him want to see my face before we had been a minute together in the chaise—aye, in spite of all his precious bargains. Oh,' shaking Mr. Minchin's card, 'I heard that old devil explaining the conditions—I'd have found the way!'

'I did not drive here with Lord Wroth.'

Again Peggy shrieked with mirth. Juliana proceeded, the shadow of a flush upon her face, still quietly:

'Where is my veil and my cloak? I must get back to my hotel.'

Peggy fastened a brooch with elaborate care under her round, pert chin; and, without removing her eyes from a satisfied contemplation of herself in the little mirror, remarked casually:

'Couldn't we go together?'

Juliana frowned.

'Go together?'

'I'm bidden to your wedding feast, my Lady Wroth.'

'Peggy,' cried the other, 'you did not betray me!'

Here Peggy wheeled round and measured Juliana with furious eyes.

'You know I dared not betray you!' she cried. 'Didn't you hold me by the very fear of death till you'd played your trick? But I'm free of you now, thank heaven, thank heaven!' She stamped her sandalled foot. 'I've done with my oath. I'm free to go my own way now without you.' She broke into laughter in the midst of her anger. Her eyes began to dance. 'I'm going to have some pleasure out of this after all. I'm going to your wedding breakfast, my lady. Ho, you don't know all the news! There's been a mad friend of your mad bridegroom going round with the bellman and calling all the disconsolates, the would-be Lady Wroths, to dry their tears and come to the feast. So I dried my tears, and I'm going. And now, since his lordship does not know yet whom he's married, there may be even more of a game than I thought. Shall we burst upon him arm-in-arm, my dear, and tell him to pick out his wife?'

'Peggy!'

All the passion of her southern blood, all the pride of her womanhood, was in Juliana's cry. It was a command and a forbidding. But the actress took a dancing step and snapped her fingers.

'Your jurisdiction is over.'

'Go, then!' said Juliana.

And humming the song that had last taken town by storm, it was then Miss Beljoy sallied out into the street—a gay little craft, with all sail spread, deck cleared for action, eager for the fray.

Juliana remained standing, absorbed in thought, long after the patter of Miss Beljoy's sandals and the rustle of her silks had faded from the stairs; then, with a long sigh, at last she roused herself and took up the black garment once more.

'What omens!' she thought, as she drew the folds about her, 'beginning with the passage through the graves, upon my wedding morning! What will come of all this for me—for him?'

(To be continued.)

is
on
?
te
ee
er
g
ur
!
d
oe
I
es
a
y

-
g.

,
e
e

r
l
l

t
y,
,